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+ YOUR ALLERGY-SEASON SURVIVAL GUIDE

MAY 2016

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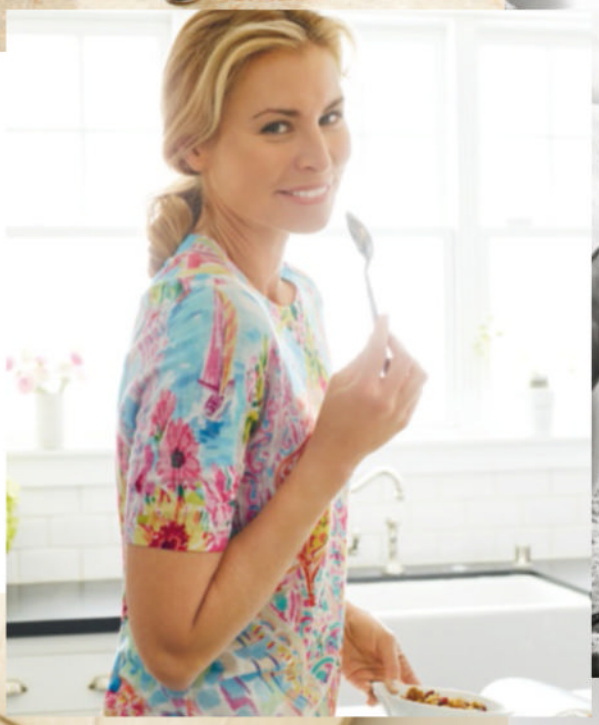

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Thoughts

"You have to find a mother inside yourself. We all do. Even if we already have a mother, we still have to find this part of ourselves inside."

SUE MONK KIDD, *THE SECRET LIFE OF BEES*

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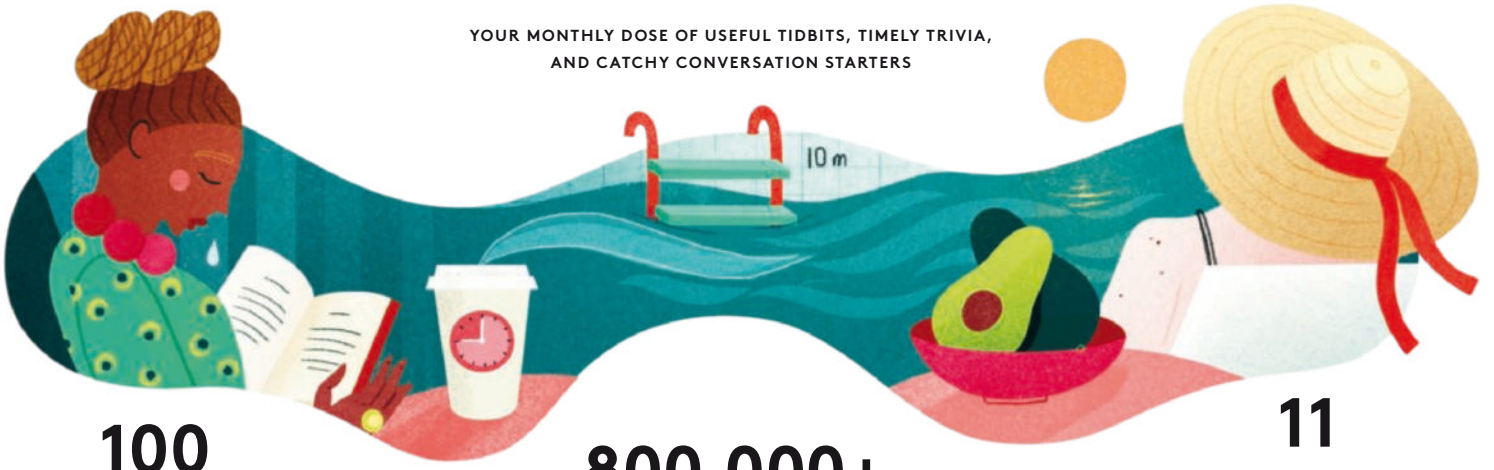
the Simple List

YOUR MONTHLY DOSE OF USEFUL TIDBITS, TIMELY TRIVIA, AND CATCHY CONVERSATION STARTERS



100

The total number of luminaries who contributed to the new anthology *Poems That Make Grown Women Cry.* Timing it just right for Mother's Day (May 8), the father-and-son editing duo of Anthony and Ben Holden enlisted women from 20-something to 90-something (think Yoko Ono, Joss Stone, Nikki Giovanni, and Judi Dench) to share their favorite tearjerkers. (Else Lasker-Schüler writes, *"Two hands are too small a bowl. / One heart is a hill too small, / To rest on."* Grab the tissues.) Readers can expect a loving dose of literature from Rumi, Shakespeare, Emily Dickinson, and Sylvia Plath on such topics as adventure, feminism, and, of course, maternal love.

45
MINUTES

How far in advance you should drink coffee before a workout to improve endurance, per a December 2015 study published in *International Journal of Sport Nutrition and Exercise Metabolism*. The report analyzed more than 600 scholarly articles on coffee or caffeine consumption to determine how coffee affects exercise. It found that drinking three to seven milligrams of caffeine from coffee per kilogram of body weight (for a 140-pound woman, that's roughly a large coffee) could boost by nearly 25 percent how far, hard, and long you go while cycling or running. So before you go Spinning this National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, be sure to get buzzed.

800,000+

How many kids received swimming lessons last year through the USA Swimming Foundation's Make a Splash program, whose goal is to teach every child to swim. Since the initiative's launch, in 2007, nearly 4 million human tadpoles have learned the life-saving fundamentals. Sobering fact: Drowning is the top unintentional-injury death for children ages one to four, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And boys are almost four times more likely to drown than girls. In honor of National Learn to Swim Day, on May 21, help keep little ones safe with these CDC tips: Use a life jacket instead of air-filled or foam toys for floating, and adults should be no more than arm's length away from swimmers under the age of five. To find Make a Splash lessons in your area, visit usaswimmingfoundation.org.

112
MILLION

The quantity of avocados, in pounds, that Americans will consume on Cinco de Mayo, according to the California Avocado Commission. That number translates to 224 million individual avocados, or 1.12 billion servings. (Holy guacamole!) According to the American Institute for Cancer Research, avocados contain key nutrients, such as fiber and vitamins B and K, and they also have a good dose of healthy monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. No matter how you eat your avocados on May 5 (in a taco, on a chip), you'll know that they're perfectly ripe if the stem gives slightly when you press it with your thumb.

11

The number of moles on a woman's right arm that can signal a greater overall risk of melanoma, according to a December 2015 *British Journal of Dermatology* study. Research shows that women with at least that many can have more than 100 moles on their bodies, which increases their risk of skin cancer five-fold. (To help you better connect the dots this May, Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month, consider that a person's odds are believed to rise 2 to 4 percent with each additional mole.) After examining data on the total number of freckles and moles on 17 different body areas on almost 3,600 female twins, the researchers found that the right arm was the area that most accurately predicted the total body count. They hope this finding can help doctors better identify those at risk quickly.

FOR MORE FUN FACTS AND FIGURES, follow us on Twitter (@RealSimple).

Written by N. Jamiyla Chisholm
Illustration by Clare Owen

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Cover Photograph by David Meredith

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Beach House Bandini top, $60. Swim shorts, $46
Miraclesuit One-piece suit, $166
Profile by Gottex Tankini, $98. Bottoms, $48

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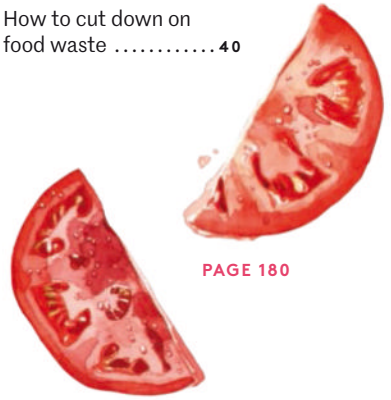

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WHAT ONE EXPERIMENT MEANS TO EVERYONE'S RETIREMENT.

The time between when people should start saving for retirement and when they actually do is known as the "Action Gap." And it has a bigger effect than you might think.

To better understand the impact, we performed a simple experiment. We asked a group of young people to use paint rollers to show us what age they think they should start saving. Then we asked a group of older people to indicate what age they actually *did* start. What we found was that there was often a years-long Action Gap between the two. But closing it up by even just a few years makes a huge difference in how much people can save over the long run. Which makes right now the perfect time to get better prepared for your retirement.

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THE FAMILY **CEO**

Tips from *Thoughts by Natalie* blogger and entrepreneur **Natalie Borton** on how she maintains balance throughout the day, from the moment the "baby alarm" goes off in the morning, to relaxing with her husband and a glass of wine in the evening.

FOR YOU

1. **GET A HEAD START**
   Wake early so you can ease into the day and enjoy that first cup of coffee.
2. **CATCH YOUR BREATH**
   When the baby naps, it's your time! Take a few minutes to reflect and recharge.
3. **MINIMIZE**
   Refine your beauty routine to use the fewest products and spend the least time. Begin with a gentle, fragrance-free lotion, like **AVEENO® Daily Moisturizing Lotion**, to keep skin soft and moisturized all day long.

FOR THEM

1. **COOK TOGETHER**
   Nothing beats a homemade meal, especially when you make it together. Once you've got a rhythm going, both parents can take turns cooking and playing with the baby.
2. **KEEP IT FLUID**
   Hydration is vital for everyone. Make sure you and the family all drink plenty of water and eat water-rich foods.
3. **BE CONSISTENT**
   A calming bathtime routine prepares the baby for sleep and guarantees a peaceful evening for all. After a soothing bath, use a natural, oat-infused lotion, like **Aveeno® Baby Daily Moisture Lotion**; then it's off to dreamland.

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In celebration of (1) Mother's Day and (2) strawberry season, we developed some elegant and delicious berry desserts to serve at a Mother's Day brunch—or anytime, really. Visit realsimple.com/strawberrydesserts for the recipes.

And if you're shopping for Mom but aren't sure what to get her, browse our unique gift ideas for *all* moms—from new ones to mothers-in-law. Visit realsimple.com/giftguide for our favorite finds.

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FORGET "ROCK-A-BYE BABY"

We asked for the non-traditional lullabies you sing (or used to sing) at night. These soothing tunes are bedtime classics in their own right.

Suzanne Strickland Stern
"Under the Boardwalk," by the Drifters

Lisa Chick
"Somewhere Over the Rainbow," from *The Wizard of Oz*

Michelle B. Valencia-Stark
"Good Night," by the Beatles

Miranda Call
"Three Little Birds," by Bob Marley

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Editor's Note

BACK WHEN I WAS in my 20s, there was cheap and there was chic, but as far as I could tell, there was no cheap chic. In other words: Where was Beth Zeigler Penn when I was living with my sister in a two-room, fourth-floor walk-up on the Upper West Side of Manhattan? Valerie and I had no real money to speak of, and we slept on a rickety loft platform that had been made by someone I no longer remember. Our "clothes closet" was a rod under the platform. You could hear the clip-clop of hooves as horses walked from Central Park to their stable down the street, and that may have been the only charming thing about the place. The kitchen sink was right outside the (miniscule) bathroom, and the (miniscule) refrigerator was under the counter. I remember getting the flu and lying on the Ikea fold-out foam sofa on the living-room floor for five days straight and thinking, woozily, *I can see my entire apartment without even getting up.*

Whenever I opened the door, there was a feeling of letdown. New York was a big, sparkling metropolis with infinite possibility, and our place was a grim box that smelled like cat litter from the apartment of the strange man across the hall.

Now I read stories like "It's No Small Thing" (page 148) and marvel. I mean, I'm an intelligent woman. Why didn't I know to take the door off a closet, put a mirror on the back of each shelf (without glue!), and turn it into a clever, pretty storage space? Maybe because we didn't have a closet. Still, Beth Zeigler Penn did that in her 900-square-foot Los Angeles home, so imagine what she might have done with our shabby loft platform.

FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM
@KVANOGTROP

I envy the 20-something small-space dwellers of today. All they have to do to improve their miniscule apartments is to go to Pinterest or Instagram or the blogs of any number of talented people who know how to take that Ikea fold-out foam sofa (do they even make it anymore?) and turn it into, say, a mini chesterfield. Or they can look at the photos of Zeigler Penn's house in this issue and come away with about 30 (cheap and chic) solutions that I swear did not exist when I was their age. Has the passage of time blurred my memory? Maybe. But I distinctly remember that unstable loft platform, and I know that, when it came to small-space living, I was not clever enough by half.

Kristin van Ogtrop

P.S. This month *Real Simple* has partnered with Talbots to give our readers an exclusive offer: From May 13 to 18, via all channels (in stores, online, and at the Talbots call center), readers get $25 off a purchase of $100 or more, plus free shipping. Use the code **REALSIMPLE** at checkout.

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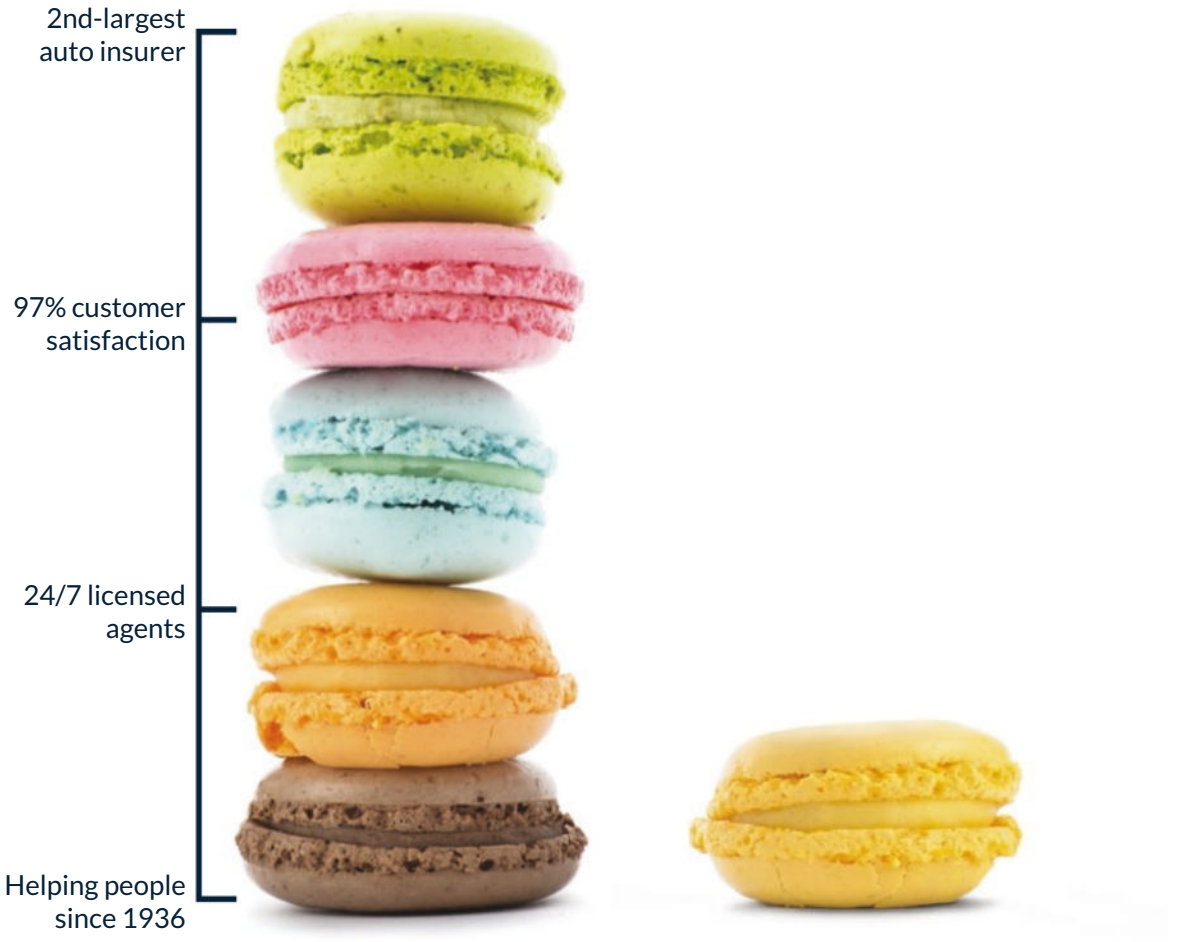
LOOK: OUR NEW COOKBOOK! Say you have some chicken cutlets. Or kale. How can you turn them into a fast, easy, *interesting* meal? *Dinner Made Simple* gives you 10 delicious recipes for a slew of everyday ingredients, from apples to zucchini. Available April 19 wherever books are sold.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PERRY HAGOPIAN; HAIR BY PAUL WARREN USING RENE FURTERER FOR ART DEPARTMENT; MAKEUP BY MELISSA SILVER FOR MAYBELLINE NEW YORK. BY MALENE BIRGER BLOUSE.



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Your Words

Q.
What is your best small-space solution?

A.

An over-the-door shoe organizer.

My husband and I had our first two sons in a tiny two-bedroom condo in Chicago. With two cribs in one small bedroom, there was hardly room for one dresser—certainly not two! So I bought the organizer and used it for diapers, wipes, blankets, burp cloths, and more. Five years later, we now have three sons and live in the suburbs. I still use it, but now for shin guards, lightbulbs, bulky socks, goggles, and flashlights. It has been so useful for our family, and it cost me less than $20!

MOLLY BROWN, Northbrook, Illinois

FOR MORE GENIUS SMALL-SPACE TRICKS TURN TO PAGE 148.

Vertical storage. A hanging wall basket for fruit, ladder-style shelves for towels in the bathroom, and high shelves in the closet. Display mementos with everyday items to break it up.

AMY ANNA REEDE, Santa Ana, California

Multitasking bench.

I have a master bedroom with a little closet. I purchased an upholstered bench that opens up. It's not only a place to sit but also a great place to store off-season clothing. I can lay the garments flat, which reduces wrinkles, and it's easily accessible if the weather suddenly changes.

MARY KAY METCALFE, Seattle, Washington

Illustration by Dan Page

Bed lifts to maximize storage.

My husband and I recently moved from a 1,500-square-foot home to a 400-square-foot home in Hawaii. The space that's created underneath the bed gives us a place to stash suitcases and boxes.

STEPHANIE SAMPIER ZALESKI, Kapa'a, Hawaii

Drop-leaf tables. They easily allow you to save space but also entertain.

@COURTAFED

Wall hooks of all shapes and sizes.

In my house, they hold keys, coats, and hats in the entryway; pots, pans, and gadgets in the kitchen; and cardigans, jewelry, and scarves in the bedroom. Their uses are endless.

RACHEL WALSH, Upton, Massachusetts

Wall space is limited and I can't stand having notes lying around, so I painted the inside of my pantry door with chalkboard paint. I use it to jot down reminders and schedules. And since it's tucked away, guests don't see when feminine products are on the shopping list!
ALLISON HESS, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania

A folding table for a workstation.

During the day, it comes out from under my bed and transforms a corner of my bedroom into my office. When I'm done working, it's collapsed and put away. (I stow my laptop and supplies in the closet.) A side benefit? I never have a messy desk.
KAT MINER, Apple Valley, California

Toe-kick drawers.
I USE THE SPACE NEAR THE FLOOR FOR JUNK-DRAWER ITEMS THAT WOULD TAKE UP PRECIOUS ROOM ELSEWHERE. I NOW GO THERE DAILY TO FIND PENS, RUBBER BANDS, FLASHLIGHTS, BATTERIES, NAILS, ETC.
MARILYN SWEITZER, Salem, Missouri

I stash mops and brooms on a pegboard in the useless space behind the laundry-room door.
MARY PIELENZ HAMPTON, Bozeman, Montana

Don't accept everything.
Of course I thank the gifter of the Halloween-themed googly-eyed salt and pepper shakers, but then I think about if I really need them. If not, I pass them along to someone who will love to decorate their home with them each fall. I have to choose what fits my style and what I feel brings life to my home. I try to toss or give away everything else.
SARAH CLAY, Nashville, Tennessee

Lazy Susans.

I use them to organize items such as spice jars, medicine bottles, and canned goods.
MILLIE BENSON, Oak Park, Illinois

We have long bins under every bed. Our favorite thing to put in them is Lego blocks. The bins hold a ton and make it easy for the kids to find what they need.
KATIE CARTWRIGHT HAMPTON, Anchorage Alaska

SUBSCRIBER OF THE MONTH

UPCOMING QUESTION
How do you ease back into reality after a vacation?

Go to realsimple.com/yourwords and let us know your answer to this question. Your response could appear on these pages.

JEN STERLING
HER ANSWER: When my daughter was in first grade, I realized I already had several tubs in the basement full of her art projects. I started to panic, knowing I had another 11 years of schooling to go. So I started to photograph her work using a large white poster board as a background, then made photo albums, organized by school year, online. I kept four or five truly special pieces, and the rest went in the recycle bin. Now not only do I have a cleaner basement but we all look at and enjoy her work, too.

STATS: 46; entrepreneur; engaged, with a 12-year-old daughter; Arnold, Maryland.
DESCRIBE YOUR PERFECT DATE NIGHT. My fiancé takes me out in his fishing boat to watch the sun set over Chesapeake Bay, then he cooks dinner (mahi fish fingers with homemade dipping sauces). Afterward we snuggle in for an after-dinner drink of wine or port by the fireplace.
WHAT IS YOUR BEST BIT OF PARENTING ADVICE? Inspire your kids to dream. My daughter has observed me doing volunteer work for her whole life. She approached me when she was six and said she wanted to help others, and we started a nonprofit called Let's Help Kids. It provides less fortunate children with special items or experiences.
WHAT IS YOUR MOST SURPRISING TRAIT? I am a strong, independent woman who can carry heavy things and open doors.... I just can't handle spiders. Too many damn legs!

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UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE FOR MODERN TIMES

SPRING AWAKENING

THE FLOWERS ARE BLOOMING, the temperature is rising, and a whole new generation is hatching. Ever find a baby bird separated from its folks and wonder how to help? Laura Simon, a wildlife ecologist at the Humane Society of the United States, says don't assume the worst. "There's a good chance the parents are nearby," she says. The key is to determine whether it's a nestling (a very young baby bird) or a fledgling (an older bird who has left the nest). A nestling will be fairly motionless and not fully feathered; it needs to be placed back in its nest immediately to maintain body heat. (It's a myth that the parents will reject a baby bird that has been touched: Wear gardening gloves, and cup your hands over its wings and under its belly.) A fully feathered bird with a short or missing tail is a fledgling, and there's no need to intervene unless it's in danger from another animal. "People often mistake fledglings for birds with broken wings, since they can't fly yet," says Simon. Whether it's a nestling or a fledgling, observe the little one for an hour to ensure that it's not orphaned. If there's no sign of Mom or Dad, or if the creature is injured or its nest is destroyed, call a rehabilitator (to find one, go to humane society.org/wildliferehab), who will take the youngster safely under his wing.

Written by
Brandi Broxson

Photograph by
Aaron Dyer

PROP STYLING BY JOJO LI

NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS

Squeeze water bottle

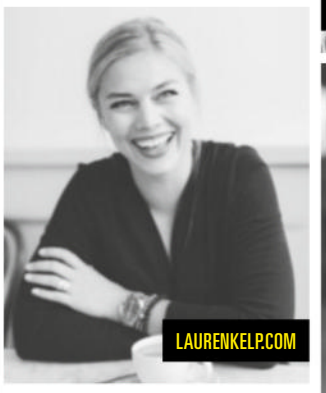
SUNGLASS CASE
Nestled inside the container, your shades are protected. The wide opening accommodates even oversize frames.

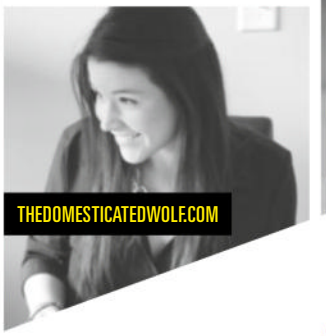
SALAD-DRESSING SHAKER
Mix up your own vinaigrette and take it to work in this handy to-go bottle. The spout even prevents overpouring.

Photograph by Aaron Dyer

CRUDITÉ CONTAINER
Picnic in the park? Pack a bottle with celery and carrot sticks.

PROP STYLING BY JOJO LI; ILLUSTRATIONS BY PETER OUMANSKI





check out the A-LIST

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Now what?!?

Smart solutions for life's little disasters

My three-year-old won't go to sleep unless I'm in the room.

SHANNON WARD, via e-mail

THE FIX: Make sure to have a little one-on-one time with her after dinner but before bedtime. "This way, she'll be less likely to engage in attention-seeking behavior at night," says Amy McCready, the founder of the Positive Parenting Solutions online training course. A consistent bedtime routine also helps. Involve your child in the creation of it, and build in typical requests, like a glass of water. After the routine, tell her that you'll be back in five minutes to check on her. "She is learning to fall asleep independently but will have reassurance that you'll return," says McCready. When it's time, stand in the doorway and briefly let her know that you're there, then leave. Repeat until she falls asleep.

I washed a load of black clothes and there was a tissue in a pocket.

M.B., via e-mail

THE FIX: Shake out the garments to get rid of as much lint as possible, says Mary Zeitler, a consumer scientist at the Whirlpool Corporation Institute of Home Science. Toss the load into the dryer on the air-dry cycle—no heat. Meanwhile, remove large tissue pieces from the washing machine, then run a rinse-and-spin cycle to get the little bits. If there's still lint on the clothing, swish it in cool water in a sink until the specks dislodge, then run a rinse-and-spin cycle in the washer. After drying, touch up with a lint roller, if needed.

How can I clean lovebugs off my car's front bumper?

JULIE MORSCH, via e-mail

THE FIX: Act fast. These insects, members of the fly family, which descend on southern states at this time of year and often end up plastered to cars, can cause paint damage. After 24 hours, the bug's pH turns acidic, says Norman Leppla, a professor of entomology at the University of Florida. That, combined with sunlight, is when auto paint is at risk. To remove splatters, Leppla says to wipe the bugs off with a wet dryer sheet, then rinse with water. This lifts off the lovebugs easily and without any abrasion. If there's still residue, Thomas D'Eri, the chief operating officer of the Rising Tide Car Wash, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, suggests spraying glass cleaner on the area and gently rubbing with a Scotch Brite Dobie All-Purpose Cleaning Pad ($3, amazon.com). Wipe immediately with a damp rag.

HAVE A DISASTER that needs solving? E-mail your problem to askrealsimple@realsimple.com.

Written by Brandi Broxson

Illustration by Peter Oumanski

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Drugstore cheat sheet

The best beauty products in the aisles, handpicked by a pro

THIS MONTH'S EXPERT:
MAKEUP ARTIST SIR JOHN

Sir John (yes, that's the name on his birth certificate) is based in New York City and is the consulting celebrity makeup artist for L'Oréal Paris. His clients include Beyoncé, Viola Davis, and Chrissy Teigen.

1 ALBA BOTANICA VERY EMOLLIENT MINERAL SPORT SUNSCREEN SPF 45
"Sunscreen should be worn by everyone, every day. This one is light-reflective, so it helps hide imperfections. Tap a little extra on cheekbones as a highlighter."
TO BUY: $11 at drugstores.

2 ARDELL DURALASH NATURALS INDIVIDUAL LASHES
"Adding a few false lashes to the center of the eyes has an opening effect. Apply a dab of glue, wait until tacky, then place a segment onto the base of your lashes."
TO BUY: $5, cvs.com.

Photograph by James Wojcik

3 L'ORÉAL PARIS TRUE MATCH LUMI CUSHION FOUNDATION
"Dab the applicator onto the makeup-soaked sponge, then just press it onto skin to create a dewy glow. Even when you layer it on problem spots, it doesn't look cakey."
TO BUY: $17 at drugstores.

Pick a muted shade (top) at the store to complement lighter skin or a brighter version (bottom) that will pop on darker tones.

4 NATURE MADE FISH OIL
"I recommend that anyone with a lackluster complexion take this. It helps boost collagen and brighten the skin—and good skin is the best foundation for any look."
TO BUY: $15 for 200, walgreens.com.

5 CARNATION NONFAT DRY MILK
"My grandmother used to soak in a bath of powdered milk and hot water. The lactic acid softens skin. I make a paste of this and use it as a soothing face mask. Leave it on until dry, then rinse."
TO BUY: $4.50 at drugstores.

6 Q-TIPS PRECISION TIPS
"Pointed Q-tips are the Magic Erasers of the cosmetics world. Add moisturizer to the end to fix smudges. They're also great for winged-eyeliner application."
TO BUY: $3.50 for 170, walmart.com.

7 GREEN EYE SHADOW
"Emerald is universally flattering. Brush it along your lash line for a fresh alternative to black."

PROP STYLING BY LINDEN ELSTRAN

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TIE DYE

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1 **TASSEL NECKLACE** Let the groovy fringe pop against a white tee. $90 (to get this discounted price, use the code REALSIMPLE), shopcocohill.com.

2 **AIRY SHIFT** This floats-over-curves cut is exactly what you'll want to live in all season long. $398, eileenfisher.com.

3 **SPLASHY HEELS** Slip on this printed pair to make any outfit instantly summery. $90, topshop.com.

4 **GAUZY SCARF** The lavender shade is gorgeous with grays, pale blues, and pinks. Simply Vera Vera Wang, $32, kohls.com.

5 **A-LINE SKIRT** An easy-going style that can be worn with wedges or flat sandals. $80, softsurroundings.com.

6 **ROOMY TOTE** The chic, moody blues make this practical leather tote a seven-days-a-week bag. $76, cameonouveau.com.

Written by Yolanda Wikiel

Photographs by Philip Friedman

SOFT STYLING BY MAI TRAN

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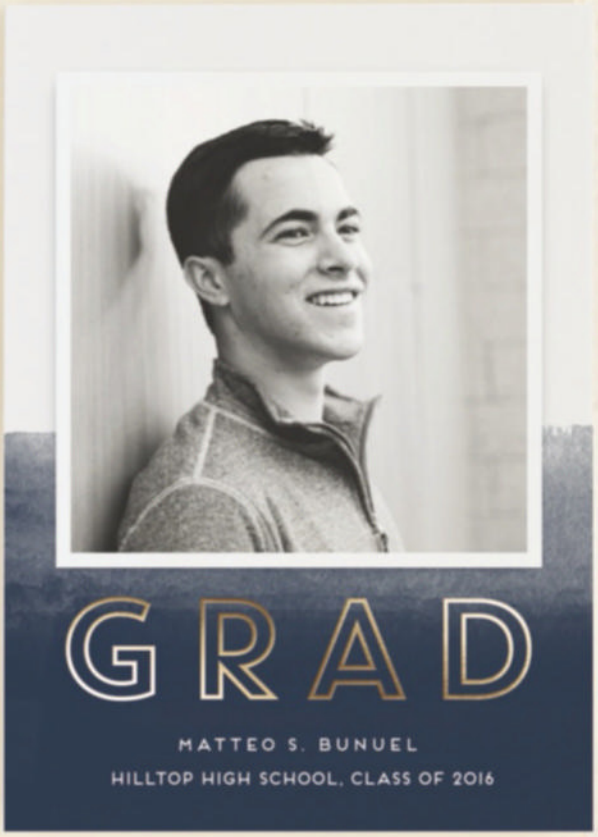

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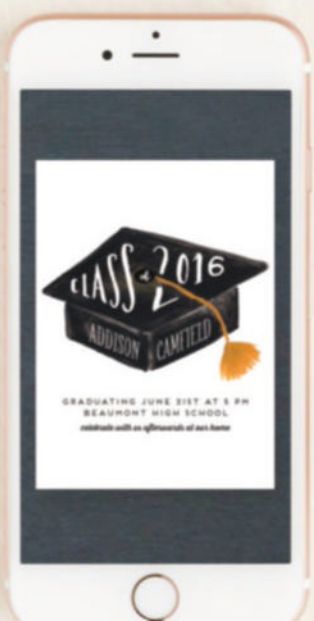

HATS OFF GRADUATION
by Frooted Design
Orange County, CA

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VANILLA EXTRACT

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but when it comes to vanilla extract, stick with the real thing. Pure extract is made from vanilla beans steeped in alcohol and water. It has a far more complex flavor than the imitation kind and helps other ingredients reach their full, delicious potential.

Written by Heath Goldman
Recipes by Anna Painter
Photograph by Aaron Dyer

RS PICK: McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract is one of the best affordable options around.

3 SWEET IDEAS

RECIPE

Quick applesauce

Combine 4 peeled, diced Granny Smith apples with ⅓ cup sugar, ¼ cup water, 1 tsp. vanilla, and a pinch of salt in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer and cook until the water has evaporated and the apples are tender, about 10 minutes. Makes 2½ cups.

EASY UPGRADE

Vanilla-roasted acorn squash

Melt 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter with 1 tsp. vanilla extract and a pinch of chile flakes in a small saucepan. Meanwhile, halve an acorn squash, discard the seeds, and slice into 1-in. wedges. Toss the squash with half the butter and season with ½ tsp. each salt and pepper. Roast at 375°F, basting twice with the remaining butter and turning the wedges each time, until the squash is tender, about 1 hour.

EASY UPGRADE

Coconut cream shake

Combine 1 pint coconut ice cream, ½ cup unsweetened coconut milk, ¼ cup toasted coconut, 2 tsp. vanilla extract, a pinch of salt, and 1 tsp. lime juice. Blend until smooth. Coat rims of 2 glasses with graham cracker crumbs. After pouring, garnish with whipped cream and additional toasted coconut.

PROP STYLING BY JOJO LI

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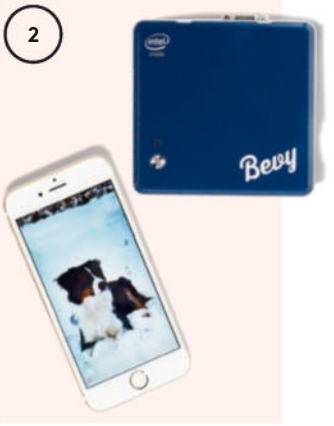
1 HIGH-PERFORMANCE PANTS These compression tights have resistance bands incorporated into the fabric, so you feel the burn in your pivotal muscles while spinning, running, or simply walking. $125, physiclo.com.



2 EASY-ACCESS PHOTO STORAGE Photos taking up all your phone memory? Tired of cloud-storage fees? This organizing system stores and compiles up to 400,000 images from every device you own and allows you to view and share them from your smartphone. $240 (to receive this discounted price, use the code RSBEVY at checkout), bevy.us.

4 REUSABLE COOKING SHEET Bake cookies or broil steak on this parchment-paper/aluminum-foil hybrid that can go from the oven straight into the dishwasher up to 500 times. Parchminum, $20, cookina.co.

3 STRESS-FREE FIRST AID Calmly handle any mishap: All the emergency essentials (the basics plus good-to-have extras, like sting-relief wipes and eyewash) are included. Game-changing bonus: how-to instructions printed inside the lid. $70, macgillfirstaidkit.com.

Written by
Tanya Christian

Photographs by
Philip Friedman

Eco revamp

ELIMINATING WEEDS

How to keep your lawn care easy on the earth

BULK UP YOUR GRASS. Thick turf with deep roots is naturally resistant to weeds. To make yours more resilient, use a mulching lawn mower—the clippings return nutrients to the soil. It's also important to water, fertilize, and mow according to your turfgrass species and region. The folks at your local U.S. Department of Agriculture office can help you determine this info. (To find yours, go to www.outreach.usda.gov.)

ELIMINATE WEEDS MORE EFFICIENTLY. Use a stirrup (a.k.a. hula) hoe. It cuts weeds off just below the soil and won't bring up new weed seeds, says Cheryl Wilen, Ph.D., an integrated-pest-management adviser at the University of California Cooperative Extension, in San Diego.

IF YOU MUST, BUY A KIND WEED KILLER. Look for an herbicide that includes one of these ingredients: potassium salts of fatty acid, clove or citrus oil, chelated iron, or corn gluten meal. Always use the recommended amount, and wear the protective gear suggested in the label directions.

—KAITLYN PIRIE

PROP STYLING BY MAI TRAN. ILLUSTRATION BY PETER OUMANSKI. THANK YOU TO JACOB BARNEY, PH.D., ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF INVASIVE PLANT ECOLOGY, VIRGINIA TECH; JOHN BUECHNER, DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES, LAWN DOCTOR; RONDA HIRNYCK, EXTENSION PROFESSOR AND PESTICIDE SPECIALIST, UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO; DON MORISHITA, PH.D., EXTENSION PROFESSOR FOR WEED SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO; STEVE VAUGHN, PH.D., PLANT PHYSIOLOGIST, USDA AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE.

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How to cut down on food waste

Every year, the United States chucks nearly 40 percent of its food. Dana Gunders, a senior scientist at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and the author of *The Waste-free Kitchen Handbook*, offers money- and planet-saving tips.

Your book says the United States wastes 50 percent more food now than it did in the 1970s. Why is that?
Portion sizes have grown tremendously since then. Plus, it's become normal for restaurants and caterers to produce excessive menus and buffets and for consumers to buy more than they need.

We've come to *expect* large amounts of food.
Yes. Research NRDC has done found that people are not comfortable with empty white space on plates or in fridges or grocery carts. There's an urge to fill those spaces with food. And in our culture, throwing food out is acceptable. In fact, leaving something on your plate is considered posh.

What else contributes to food waste?
A lot of produce won't get picked for market because it's not pretty enough to be sold. It gets tossed or turned into the soil.

What's the environmental impact?
About 70 percent of our water and 50 percent of our land is devoted to agriculture. So when we're not eating that food, it's a huge unnecessary use of resources. About 33 million cars' worth of greenhouse gases are produced to grow food that never gets eaten.

What types of food get wasted most?
Fruits and vegetables. Tied for second are dairy products and bread. Meat is third, but it has the biggest impact. If you throw out a hamburger, that's the equivalent of taking a 90-minute shower, in terms of the water it took to produce it.

How can we waste less produce?
If you need small amounts of specific fruits or veggies for a recipe, buy them from the salad bar so the excess won't rot in your fridge. Or buy frozen versions, which have almost the same nutritional value with none of the pressure.

What else can we do?
Be realistic. What tends to happen is you buy all these groceries on the weekend because you're feeling aspirational about how much you're going to cook. But by Wednesday, life has happened and you're ordering takeout. And then the broccoli goes bad. Instead, plan for that. If you can, shop often and buy less.

How else can we be conscientious shoppers?
Use a shopping list or an app. And take a last look in your cart before checking out. Think about when in the near future you're going to eat each item. If you don't have a clear answer, don't buy it.

You also talk about conducting a "waste audit."
For two weeks, jot down what you throw out to pinpoint what you are wasting and why. Did dinner plans change? Did you get wooed by a sale and buy too much? Write down the cost so you feel the financial pain.

How closely should we follow expiration dates?
Take them with a grain of salt, as they're not federally regulated. A "use by" or "best by" date typically says when the product will be at its best quality. There may be a change in taste, color, or texture.

So we may be throwing out food that's still OK?
Yes. A big misunderstanding is that when food is old, it will make you sick. The main reason for illness is pathogens like salmonella and E. coli that contaminate food at the farm or processing plants.

What do we need to be careful of?
Mold, green potatoes, and rancid meat, oil, or nuts.

What are some ideas to use up food?
Toss a mishmash of items into a tortilla or in fried rice or pasta salad. You can also sauté wilted lettuce with butter and garlic. Even if you waste a little bit less, it's still an accomplishment.

HOW LONG WILL IT KEEP?
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Written by Yolanda Wikiel
Illustration by Peter Oumanski

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GOOD READ

GALLERY STOCK

Sweet emotion

Growing up in a family that prized toughness, *Megan Abbott* loved gangster movies, gumshoes, and gun molls. But one enduring influence could always bring her to tears.

Photograph by Julien Magre

YEARS AGO, a fellow novelist told me, "Everyone always asks writers about their influences. But it's the ones you can't name that matter most."

It wasn't until a few months ago, while sitting at home and watching a movie, that I figured out what he meant.

The film was *Calvary*, the story of a priest in a small town whose residents have, in part because of abuse scandals, lost most of their faith in the Catholic Church. I'd been meaning to watch it for a while but could no longer remember who'd recommended it to me.

I'm not sure what I was expecting, but *Calvary* turned out to be surprisingly harrowing, and as it unfurled, I felt my stomach clench. Then, in the movie's pitch-dark and haunting final moments—

moments of violence and redemption—something happened that hasn't happened to me in years: I burst into tears, and couldn't stop.

There was, on the face of it, nothing about this movie that should affect me so strongly. I'm not a devout Catholic, nor am I typically moved by tales of faith tested. But, most of all, I'm not the kind of person who cries at movies, at least not with such intensity. Yet the ending absolutely tore me apart.

And I knew just whom I wanted to talk to immediately after. The person who, I suddenly remembered, had recommended it to me in the first place. The person who *knew*.

"Mom," I said into the phone, my voice pinched and childlike, "Mom, that *movie*."

"I know," she says. "I know just what you mean."

All through my childhood, my parents took my brother and me to the revival theater in our hometown of Grosse Pointe, Michigan, to see the classics, everything from *Sunset Boulevard* and *Some Like It Hot* to *Harold and Maude* and *Grand Illusion*. (Which makes me laugh now: What an eight- or nine-year-old might glean from a 1937 French movie about prisoners of war I cannot guess.)

But my favorites were the gangster movies. A greater portion of my childhood and adolescence was spent watching mob sagas, heist tales, political or spy thrillers, and, my favorites of all: film noir, those darkly glamorous movies from the 1940s and 50s in which desperation and desire bloomed.

These films were the family canon, and it suited our energy. My dad, a scholar of political theory, and my brother, a future prosecutor, were—and remain—great debaters, analyzers. After going to a movie, our favorite family sport on the car ride home was to argue about and dissect and occasionally eviscerate what we had just seen. And the worst criticism one could level at any movie was that it was "sentimental." And it applied not just to five-handkerchief weepies (which we rarely saw, unless they were holiday or sports movies), yes, but even to witty, sparkling movies with "Hollywood" endings, such as Frank Capra's *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *It's a Wonderful Life*, Vincente Minnelli's *Meet Me in St. Louis*, or Steven Spielberg's *E.T.*

Sentimental. The verdict was damning. It was a sign of softness, a willingness to be manipulated or, in gangster-movie parlance, "played." I decided "sentimental" was something I never wanted to be.

We had an outlier in the family, however. A traitor in our midst. And that was my mother. And, reader, I confess to you now: I was her secret comrade.

"I'm not feeling so great," I'd say, age 10 or 11.

"Really?" my mom would ask, a furrow over her brow. "Because you look just fine."

"My throat hurts, and I feel a little dizzy."

She would give me the once-over, slightly dubious, but in the end she'd always say, "OK. I'll write you a note."

Picture the scene: A few hours later, one of us is in the recliner, the other on the scratchy family-room sofa, the daisy afghan stretched from one to the other, and we are watching *Splendor in the Grass* or *Imitation of Life*. *Doctor Zhivago* or *Stella Dallas*. Candy-colored melodramas, Hollywood-slick tearjerkers about social injustice, families torn asunder. Orphans.

We're drinking Pepsi-Cola in tall glass bottles and eating potato chips or gingersnaps dipped in milk.

And when the stars fail to align, when love is doomed or death is nigh and the climax arrives and Barbara Stanwyck watches through a rainy window as the daughter she gave up gets married, or Omar Sharif spots his long-lost love, Julie Christie, through a tram window but is struck by a heart attack before he can reach her—in all these moments, one thing can be counted on. I will look over at my mom's teary face, pink and soft as a carnation, and feel tacit permission to do something I never would with anyone else: cry. Well, weep, sob, lament, wail.

But in the years to follow, especially during my irony-laden teens, when

And when the stars fail to align, when love is doomed or death is nigh, I will look over at my mom's teary face and feel tacit permission to do something I never would with anyone else: cry.

About the author

Megan Abbott is the Edgar award–winning author of seven novels, including *Dare Me*, *The End of Everything*, and *The Fever*. Her new novel, *You Will Know Me*, comes out in July.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DREW REILLY

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As the years go by, as we grow older, we bury parts of ourselves, don't we? The parts that make us vulnerable. That show us perhaps as we really are.

the Coen Brothers and Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs* became my cinematic touchstones, I drifted further and further from my mom's and my shared experience of uncomplicated movie love. Of experiencing a movie that I might have, under any other circumstances, rejected as manipulative, cloying or, yes, sentimental, and just letting go.

Which brings me back to *Calvary,* the movie that just tore a hole in me.

Watching it, its slow build, its emotional heft, I thought of how, whenever I'm asked about my earliest writerly inspirations, I always talk about gangster movies, about watching Jimmy Cagney waving a tommy gun or pushing a grapefruit in his moll's face. It's such a safe, swaggering answer to the question of inspiration, which is really a larger question about what *moves* us. What moves me.

It made me think: As the years go by, as we grow older, we bury parts of ourselves, don't we? The parts that make us vulnerable. That show us perhaps as we really are.

But my mom always gave, and still gives, me permission to access those feelings, those qualities. Now I see that my mom's and my "secret"—our pleasure in melodrama and glitzy heartbreak—was less about those movies themselves than the way it gave me permission to respond purely emotionally to art. That there were things we might watch, or read, or see, that just wallop us and that we can't explain away into tidy little packages.

And so, when the movie ended and the tears came—great, ugly, embarrassing tears—she was the only person I wanted to talk to.

There I was, 43, damp Kleenex in hand, and crying on the phone to my mom.

"I know," she kept saying, "I haven't cried that much in years."

Her understanding was one deeper than words, far richer than any analysis. But not softer—no, I don't think so. Sharper and more pointed than any rhetorical lancet. Because it cut to the quick, to the center of me, the very place my mother had breathed life to all those years ago.

So next time, when someone asks me what my influences are, I have a different answer. Because what I realized that night watching *Calvary* is that my greatest influence—the one I couldn't name or speak before but now can—is neither gangster movies nor melodramas, crime sagas nor tearjerkers. It's my mom. ■

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Modern Manners

REAL SIMPLE'S ETIQUETTE EXPERT, CATHERINE NEWMAN, OFFERS HER BEST ADVICE ON YOUR SOCIAL QUANDARIES.

In my mind, BYOB means bring as much as I—or my husband and I—will be drinking. But I've noticed recently that it is now a looser term meaning, "Bring enough to share." Am I a Scrooge for showing up with one bottle of beer (or the like) that I plan on consuming instead of a six-pack to share with everyone at the party?
M.H.

You're right that it's a confusing expression, and you definitely don't need to spring for the Dom Pérignon, but I would never bring less than a six-pack of beer or a full bottle of wine to a party. (I'm trying to imagine what the wine version of a single beer would be. A to-go cup?) The host is creating a festive and convivial atmosphere, and your generosity of spirit, rather than a letter-of-the-law interpretation of BYOB, is the best way to help foster that. Plus, your host has done the work of providing the meal and the hospitality. Your contribution is the least you can do to help offset the expense. And if they should end up with enough leftover booze for the next party? Fantastic! (In my friends group, we call this the "wine tax.") That said, if money is tight, then show up with whatever you can—or empty-handed and apologetic: "I'm so sorry not to have brought something," you can tell your host. "But I'm so happy to be here." Then help yourself to a drink; other folks will be glad to share.

About Catherine
The author of *Catastrophic Happiness* and *Waiting for Birdy,* Catherine Newman has shared her wisdom on matters ranging from family and friends to happiness and pickling in numerous publications. She gets advice from her husband and two opinionated children in Amherst, Massachusetts.

PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

A friend and I plan on taking a "bucket list" trip this summer (think Great Wall of China). We have a third friend who would probably like to take this trip, too, but neither of us wishes to travel with her. She is a good friend, and we do many things together—concerts, movies—but she can be difficult and critical, which would make traveling with her for two weeks unenjoyable. As an aside, it might be financially difficult for her to afford this trip. We are very fond of this person and do not want to hurt her feelings. How can we let her know that we wish to go on this trip as just the two of us?
M. S.

While it's totally understandable to *want* both things—excluding your difficult friend from a dream vacation and not hurting her feelings—that doesn't mean you can *do* both things. This really is the most challenging kind of conundrum, and it comes up a lot: When do we assert our own desires, even at the cost of someone else's happiness? In this case, given that travel can strain even the most harmonious relationships, you should take this once-in-a-lifetime trip without your difficult friend along. Don't explain to her why she's not included—the premeditatedness will just make her feel worse. But do

expect her to be hurt when she hears about the trip, which she will. You won't want to treat it like a secret, because that would humiliate her, even though you will be at pains not to discuss it in front of her. (Hello, tightrope!) "I'm so sorry," you can say, if she asks about it. "It's a trip the two of us had been dreaming of for ages, and we didn't end up including anyone else in the planning." Ultimately, she might pull back a little bit from the friendship. And, if she were writing to me for advice, I would probably suggest that that's a healthy, self-preserving strategy.

Call me vain, but I am really upset with a family member who whips out her smartphone, snaps my picture, and immediately posts it on social media. Many times I consider the image to be unflattering, and I am dismayed that hundreds of her online friends see me in that light. Call me old-fashioned, but I, a senior citizen, think it is common courtesy to be asked if I want my picture taken. Then I should be able to preview it and decide if I want it posted. Am I being unreasonable? Am I out of step with the times?
D. B.

Yes, you are out of step with the times—and thank goodness, because, no, you are not being unreasonable. The proliferation of technology has given folks an "all bets are off" feeling about common courtesy. Every documentation of a double chin or an unattractive expression is fodder for public consumption, and you are well within your rights to balk at this dignity-defying new normal. I would say to your family member what you say here: "Call me old-fashioned, but I'd appreciate the opportunity to vet your photos of me before you post them." If the photographer is taken aback, you can joke that it's not as if you're asking to be seated in a Victorian blouse for your daguerreotype session—you just want to make sure you're looking your best. And besides, it's unlikely that your family member posts photographs of

herself looking less than terrific. ("Who cares that this old lady is eating a ham sandwich? My hair looks great!") In other words, it's not that vanity has dropped out of the picture—it's that courtesy to others has. This is an important phenomenon to point out and for all of us to think about remedying.

Is it polite to chew ice—at the table or anywhere? How do you address this with a loved one who continues to chew after he has been asked politely to stop?
A. H.

To answer your first question: Is it polite to chew ice? No, it is not classically polite. But in a world marred by deep and various unkindnesses, someone else's pleasure in frozen water should rank toward the bottom of our concerns. My daughter loves to chew ice, and I stop her only because our dentist has suggested that she'll damage her enamel if she keeps doing it, and her teeth are my business. If this ice-chewing loved one is not your child, decide if this is the battle you want to pick. After all, tolerating a friend's or a partner's idiosyncrasies is a crucial element of a healthy relationship. But if the behavior is simply intolerable to you, then you can make a stronger case for an end to it. So to answer your second question: Rather than asserting the objective rudeness of the ice chewing—and getting into a power struggle about it—describe its effect on *you*. "I'm sorry to harp on this, but ice chewing really bothers me, and I'd be so grateful if you would stop." Look up *misophonia*—a condition in which certain sounds, including that of chewing, cause irritability or disgust—and decide if this describes you. If it does, add that self-diagnosis to your request.

HAVE AN ETIQUETTE QUESTION?

Submit your social conundrums to Catherine at **REALSIMPLE.COM/MODERNMANNERS.** Selected letters will be featured on these pages every month.

5 behaviors that are annoying your coworkers

You already know not to chat on the phone at top volume or file your nails at your desk. (Right? *Right?*) If you truly want to respect your office mates, here's what else to work on.

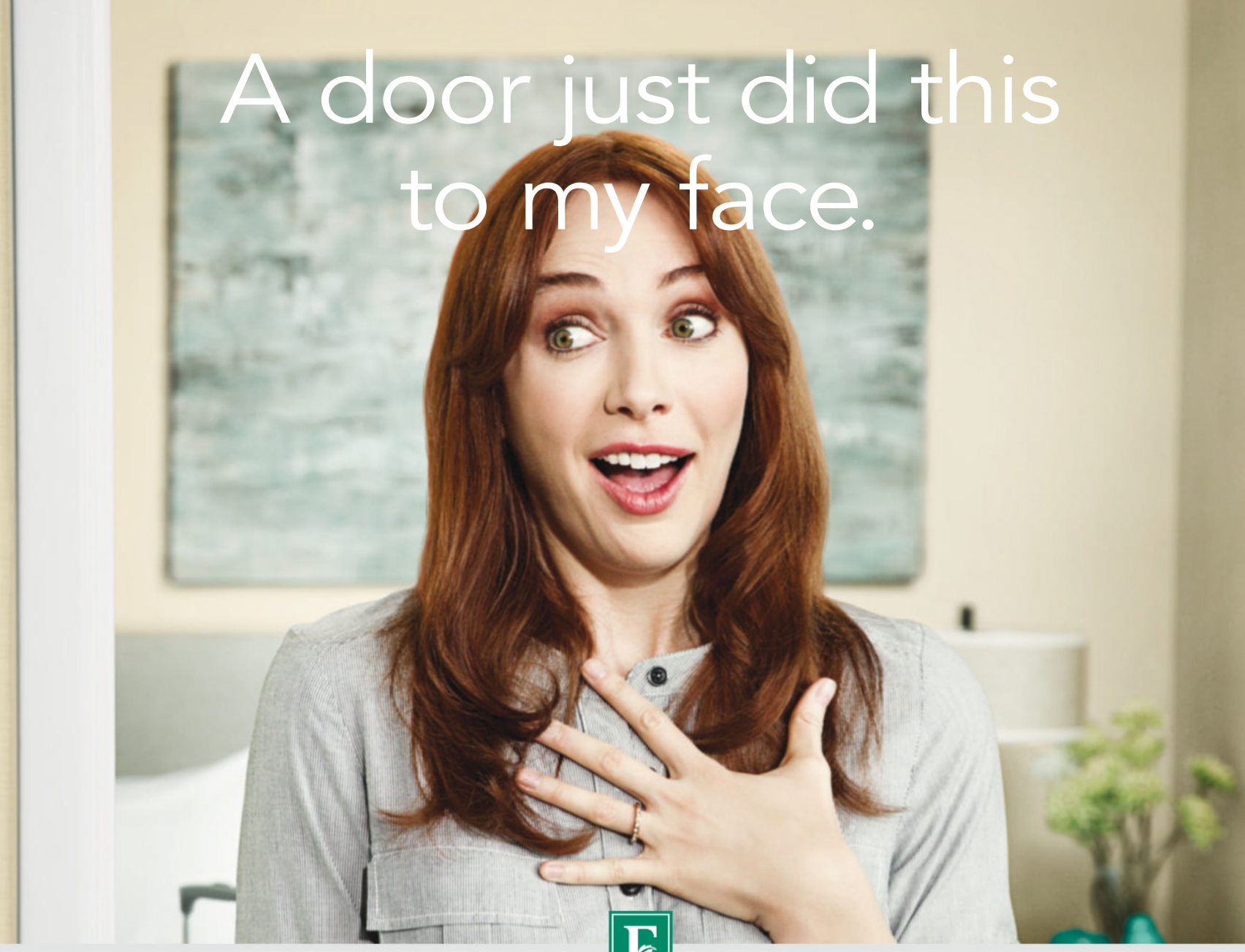
Written by Jane Borden
Illustration by Ben Wiseman

1

SARA BAREILLES

Shooting down ideas too soon.

One of the greatest gifts you can give colleagues when you're brainstorming is patience. Don't try to edit each other's ideas before they've been fully expressed. Because no matter what you are creating or problem-solving, there will be a lot of good ideas and a lot of bad. You just have to open the floodgates. I'm putting together a new musical, and what I love about the process is that we can't run away from the fact that we'll make mistakes. For example, there was a musical number that originally included dancing sperm. That turned out to be one of those mistakes. It's scary but also liberating. You have to allow a safe space for people to be free and unedited in their expressions. If people are afraid to make mistakes, that will inhibit everyone's success. But if you feel safe and trust your collaborators, you can be good editors for each other when it counts.



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2

CHARLES DUHIGG

Sending unnecessary e-mails.

You wouldn't think, *I forgot that one thing that so-and-so said during a meeting, and I could definitely look through my notes to find it, but instead I'm just going to call someone three desks over and ask.* Because telephone calls have this etiquette around them. But you *would* e-mail. And it burdens your coworkers and hurts productivity. (So does constantly sending e-mails to 12 people saying, "Let's make a decision." Just make one.) Ask yourself, "Do I really need this question answered?" If the answer is yes, you can probably find the information yourself. If it's no, then you aren't pushing the task off on another person unnecessarily.

3

MATTHEW DIFFEE

Thinking your job is harder than everyone else's.

In one of my cartoons, a guy with glasses on and pens in his pocket says, "To be honest, I'm not sure accounting can be taught." I hate it when people think their jobs are *so* important. If you say, "I can't help you. You don't understand what I'm dealing with," you disrespect the person's job and what he or she needs. Everyone is busy. Pay attention to what your coworkers do. It's usually more complicated and time-consuming than you think.

4

KERRI HUNSLEY

Being a Negative Nancy.

Most team members work in my store because they have some sense of purpose, like they're socially or environmentally conscious. But there's also always someone there only for a paycheck, who doesn't have a great attitude or who doesn't want to participate. If that person is a naysayer or not pulling her weight, it annoys everyone else. It's not fair. If that's you, maybe you need to be in a different position. That's OK. Don't be a prisoner of your job! Dig down and think, what attracted you to the job in the first place? If you can't find any satisfaction, maybe you're in the wrong one.

5

ANITA WILLIAMS WOOLLEY

Interrupting—women, especially.

In a study measuring collective intelligence, which is a kind of team IQ score, we found that when a group is mostly women, the score is above average. But it goes down when women interrupt one another. Interrupting can energize men, but it causes women to perceive conflict. It annoys them and ends up hurting their performance. As more and more workplaces put together teams to address different problems, the question comes up: How can we make those teams perform consistently? Women positively affect teamwork. But if you interrupt them, you're dragging down the group.

THE EXPERTS

SARA BAREILLES is a singer-songwriter and the writer of the music and lyrics for the new Broadway musical *Waitress*. She lives in New York City.

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CHARLES DUHIGG is a Pulitzer Prize–winning reporter for the *New York Times* and the author of the book *Smarter Better Faster*. He lives in New York City.

ANITA WILLIAMS WOOLLEY is an associate professor of organizational behavior and theory at the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University. She lives in Pittsburgh.

MATTHEW DIFFEE has contributed cartoons to *The New Yorker* since 1999 and is the author of *Hand Drawn Jokes for Smart Attractive People*. He offers free prints at mattdiffee.com. He lives in Los Angeles.

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THIS MONTH'S EXPERT

CYNDI LEE, the founder of the influential Buddhist-based Om Yoga, now owns Yoga Goodness Studio, in central Virginia. She is training to become a Buddhist chaplain. Find her at cyndilee.com.

Over the course of a day, set your phone alarm to ding (or vibrate) every 30 minutes. No matter what you're doing when the ding comes, drop that activity and sit quietly for a minute. Creating gaps like this offers many rewards. It brings a sense of spaciousness. It imprints an understanding that nothing is so important that you can't let go for a moment. And it shows you how refreshing it is to dive up and out of your dense mind thicket (or computer screen) now and then. If every 30 minutes is too much, how about four times, spread out over the day? With each ding, notice where you are and whom you're with, and allow yourself to integrate more fully into your life as it's happening—now, rather than later.

Photograph by Johnér

OFFSET

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1. Woven wedges offer stiletto height without pressure on the balls of the feet. **TO BUY: $89, marcfisher footwear.com.**

2. With snakeskin-printed leather and lug soles, this pair has lots to show for itself. **TO BUY: $448, agl.com.**

YOUR ULTIMATE SHOE FIX

Shining examples of the season's biggest trends—in wedges, heels, and flats. (Plus a few tips on how to wear these pairs with ease.)

Written by
Penny Wrenn

Photographs by
Jens Mortensen

THE TREND

POINTY-TOE PUMPS

As every stylish woman knows, pumps + anything = everything. Their strong silhouette sharpens even the most basic look.

1
Amp up your work staples with highlighter yellow suede.
TO BUY: Ivanka Trump, $135, nordstrom.com.

2
The cool wooden heel offers stable footing.
TO BUY: $325, etienne aigner.com.

3
These metallic stripes look right any time of year.
TO BUY: $475, us.lk bennett.com.

4
With heels barely three inches high, these simple two-tone beauties will be your every-day go-to.
TO BUY: $50, zara.com.

THE QUEST FOR NON-PINCHY POINTY TOES

TIP 1 Opt for a style made of pliable leather or stretchy fabric, not rigid patent leather or synthetics.

TIP 2 Trace each foot on a piece of paper. Bring the paper when you shop, and hold any potential shoes over the outlines. If the lines are well outside the perimeter of the shoes, you'll feel the pinch. If they match up, you've found a good fit.

PROP STYLING BY ANGHARAD BAILEY

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THE TREND

ANKLE-WRAP FLATS

If you're bored with your ballet flats, there's a new silhouette on the scene that looks fresher but feels just as grounded.

1

This simple espadrille is a great partner for all your sundresses and shorts.
TO BUY: $195, longchamp.com.

2

Flats make you feel stumpy? Pointy toes have a leg-lengthening effect.
TO BUY: Summit, $129, nordstrom.com.

3

Neutral flats are sweeter with scallops and polka dots.
TO BUY: $205, cecelia newyork.com.

4

These fun espadrilles are the beachy equivalent of sneakers.
TO BUY: $275, toryburch.com.

NOTICE A TREND?
"The style not to overlook for spring 2016: a shoe that wraps and ties." —Ken Downing, fashion director at Neiman Marcus

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THE TREND

HIGH-HEELED SANDALS

When you want to step it up, these statement shoes—rife with detail, color, and tassels (why not?)—do the trick.

1

Minimalist mules with splatter-paint cork heels are great for low-key days.
TO BUY: Charles by Charles David, $119, charles david.com.

2

In a neutral shade, laced-up tassels are feminine but not overly fussy.
TO BUY: $495, ullajohnson.com.

3

Dramatic, intertwining fuchsia straps snugly cradle the foot.
TO BUY: $195, klubnico.com.

4

Shake up that same-old dress with some festive fringe.
TO BUY: $148, banana republic.com.

HOW TO AVOID A HIGH-HEEL HANGOVER

Prevent those can't-stand-for-another-minute aches.

ADD A SKIN BARRIER. Shield crushed little piggies by slipping on a toe sleeve (PediFix Visco-Gel Little Toe Sleeves, $6, pedifix.com) to absorb friction. A protective balm (like Foot Anti Blister Balm; $8, bodyglide.com) can also reduce chafing.

MOVE AROUND. Standing in one spot is typically harder on feet than walking, says North Carolina–based podiatrist Jane Andersen, a spokesperson for the American Podiatric Medical Association. If you're at a party, make a point to mingle rather than propping yourself against a wall.

TAKE BREAKS. Throughout the day, Andersen recommends kicking off your heels for a bit. "If your feet have swollen, elevate them for 10 minutes," she says. (Otherwise it may be hard to squeeze back into your heels.) The next day, wear comfy flats.

END THE NIGHT RIGHT. When you get home, soak your sore feet in warm water and Epsom salts. The theory is that the magnesium in the salts helps to ease aches and pains.

bornshoes.com/move

Featured style: Petula

Børn

THE TREND

FLAT SANDALS

They're the style you turn to all summer—new and improved with some fun little details. (Look, more tassels!)

1

This pair's fringe benefits include instant chicness and an easy-on-and-off zipper. **TO BUY: $65, solesociety.com.**

2

The subtle shimmer means you can be comfortable *and* dressy. **TO BUY: SJP, $325, couture.zappos.com.**

3

A pop of white is a breath of fresh air for an all-black outfit. **TO BUY: French Connection, $95, bloomingdales.com.**

4

Jeweled details play up both preppy and boho vibes. **TO BUY: $178, jackrogers usa.com.**

SUMMER-SHOE FUNK?
To tackle grime and freshen insoles, give footwear a quick once-over inside and out with Sandal Rescue wipes ($8, bootrescue.com).

MAY WE HELP YOU FIND YOUR SIZE?

You'll find cool shoes for small, large, narrow, or wide feet at these retailers.

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- Nordstrom.com
- StuartWeitzman.com
- Zappos.com

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The razor that took her hair

The show that made her a star

The letters that gave her hope

The bandana that covered her head

The family that stood by her side

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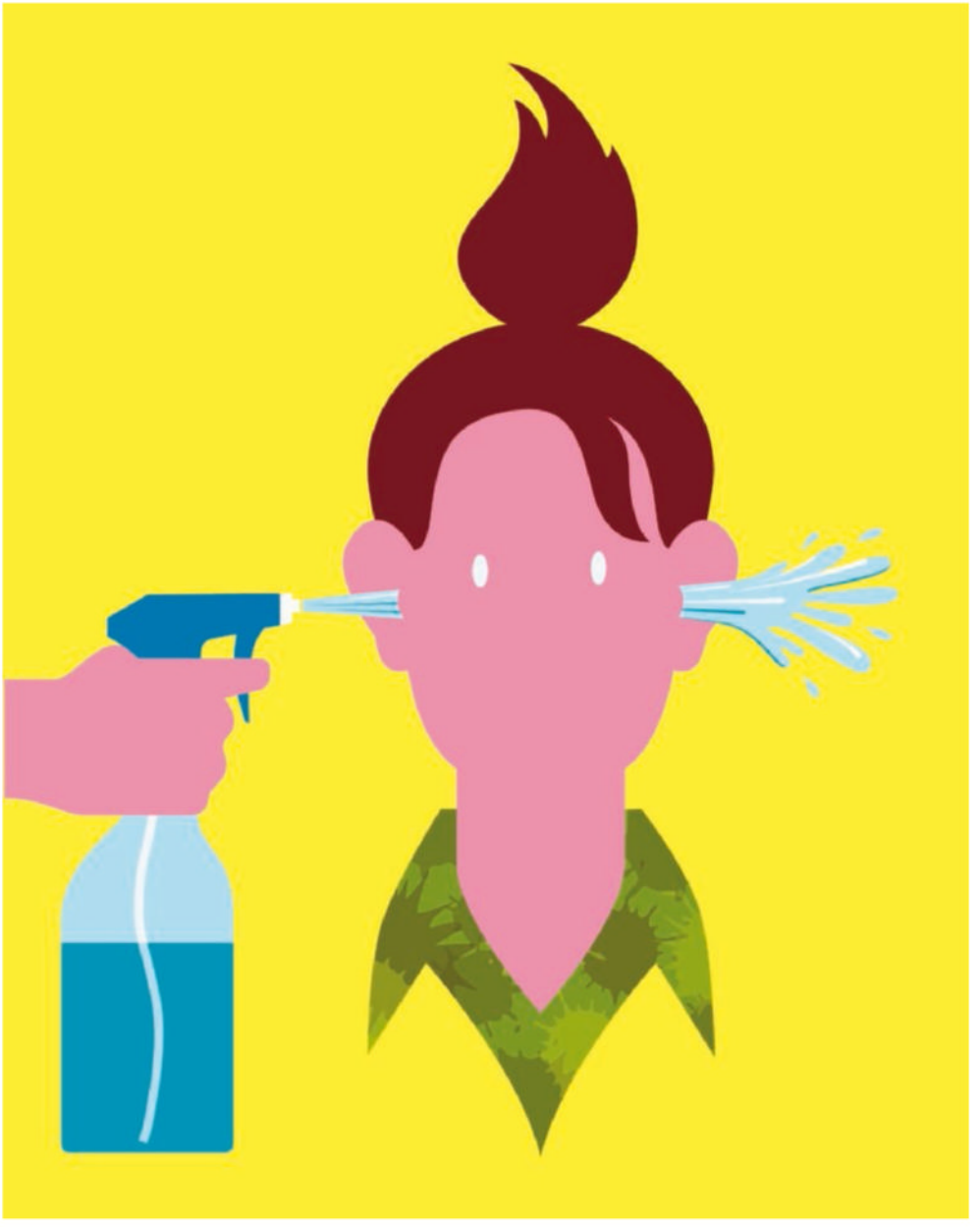
I went to cleaning school so you don't have to

Our intrepid reporter, Judith Newman—a self-described lousy housekeeper—gets an immersive, hands-on lesson in scrubbing and dusting. Here's the dirt.



MY MOTHER once gave me some valuable advice on housekeeping: "You want to feel better about your home? Take your glasses off." (This was actually her advice for many things, including men.) For years her wise words contributed to my happiness. And growing up in the 70s in a suburb where many wives devoted themselves to ensuring that the nap of their shag rugs ran in the same direction, I got a certain perverse enjoyment out of having a mother who (a) had a career and (b) was a terrible housekeeper.

I inherited her lax M.O., which, while fine for me, is a source of frustration for my fastidious husband. This can all be summed up in a little story I like to call "Hair Ball": Years ago, when we had a golden retriever, there was a tuft of Monty's fur next to the bed. John wanted to see how long it would take me to notice, so he kept adding to it. Eventually it was nearly basketball-size. I never noticed. "Hair Ball" is now his shorthand for everything wrong with my cleaning aptitude.

So when *Real Simple* suggested I might benefit from what Merry Maids, an international cleaning company, calls "Boot Camp," all John had to say was the magic word (*Hair ball!*), and I was—begrudgingly—on board. Staff training is typically held at a company facility, but for this story, a condensed version would take place in my home. When a person trains

Illustrations by Aad Goudappel

with Merry Maids, he or she has three weeks to learn the techniques. I had one day. It was a long day.

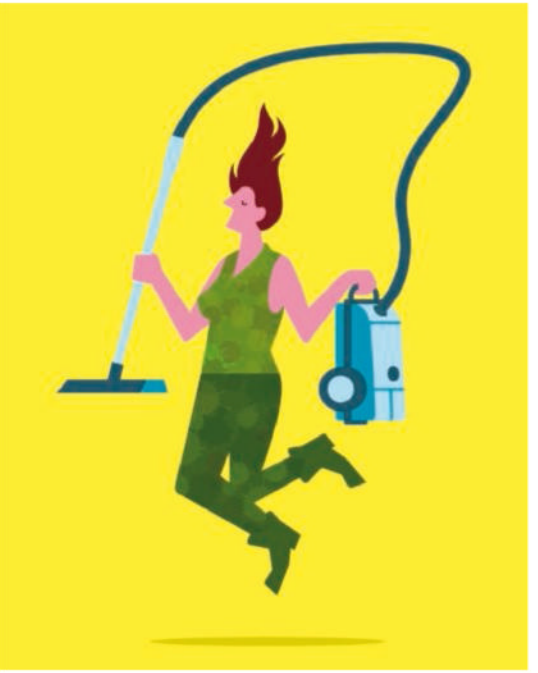
The house call

As Debra Johnson surveys my apartment, I follow her around apologizing, even though it's actually not so bad, because an hour ago I ran around straightening up. An easygoing blond from Memphis, Debra is one of Merry Maids' top pros. About 18 years ago, she started as a house cleaner, and now she heads the company's training program. If there is a stain she cannot get out, it must be made from the bodily fluids of aliens.

The plan is to clean three rooms: a bedroom, the kitchen, and a bathroom. Debra has brought along safety equipment (knee pads). My instinct is to crawl back into bed. But then she sits me down to discuss the cleaning implements that I should have. This makes me happy. I'm not great at cleaning, but I'm excellent at ordering things on Amazon. The first item is something that I already own: a device for getting rid of calluses.

"That's not for feet. It's a pumice scouring stick for cleaning toilet-bowl rings," says Debra. "You wet it first, scrub a little, and the ring is gone." Huh?

In all, there are about 14 products a Merry Maids cleaner uses (some custom-made), for every surface from tile to wood to glass. Nothing terrible will happen if you use the wrong product—except, perhaps, on stone surfaces. Colored all-purpose cleaners can bleed into stone, and foaming products you might use



to remove soap scum can cause tile to pit. So it's worthwhile to buy a specialized cleaner if you have marble, granite, or stone-tile surfaces.

Merry Maids uses green products with nonvolatile organic compounds whenever possible, as long as they clean as well as the regular products. Possibly the most important—and greenest—product you can buy is a steamer for hard surfaces that are sealed, like hardwood and ceramic-tile floors. They clean with heat and (steam-hot) water, not chemical agitation. Debra demonstrated on my tile floors. No question, it worked better than my regular cleaners, leaving none of the sticky residue that causes what my 13-year-old son Henry calls Gecko Feet.

Heart of darkness

Debra and I decide to tackle Henry's bedroom because it is the filthiest room in my house. It would be the filthiest room in your house, too. She explains two principles: Always clean from top to bottom so dirt falls downward and you don't have to reclean, and tackle floors from the farthest end of a room, working your way toward the door. Just imagine that you're talking to a crazy party guest and you need to back away slowly without getting trapped in a corner. That's how it is with dirt.

THE BEST WAY TO CLEAN A BEDROOM IS TO FOLLOW FOUR STEPS:

1. STRAIGHTEN UP. Make the bed; fluff the pillows; throw the toys in the bins. (You have bins, right? If you have young kids, you need bins.)
2. REMOVE DUST. Debra has a "high duster" for blinds, ceiling fans, and track lighting. It's essentially a microfiber cloth on a stick.
3. WIPE DOWN. Use a microfiber (without solution) to wipe all furniture thoroughly. Work from the top of a piece to the bottom, and if it's made of wood, follow the grain.
4. VACUUM THE FLOORS. Merry Maids uses a strap-on vacuum that's like wearing R2D2 on your back. For nonpros, Debra suggests the CleanMax Zoom. "It's light and easy to carry up stairs, and it has two speeds," she says. "Use the lower speed on an area rug so the vacuum doesn't gobble it up."

I am put on wall duty, using a Mr. Clean Magic Eraser on marks made from hours of bouncing balls. Debra has a crush on the Magic Eraser; it is second in her affections only to the microfiber cloths. I'm always a little afraid to find out what's in them, because they're great, and if they're made of kittens, I don't want to have to stop using them. (Not to worry, Debra says. It's melamine foam.)

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Pull Off a Better Paint Job

*Compared to 3M paper-backed masking tapes.

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Land of fingerprints

Next we go into the kitchen and wipe down the wood cabinets and the tile walls with a dampened microfiber cloth. Debra uses another cloth spritzed with Naturally Power-Polishing Stainless Steel Polish; it leaves my refrigerator shiny. The most used and most ignored area of my kitchen is the inside of the microwave, where apparently a murder took place. Turns out, it's only the remnants of last night's brisket. Debra takes a bowl of hot water and vinegar and nukes it for a few minutes. Ah, the miracle of steam! It is now easy to wipe off the goo. Finally, we use the stone cleaner on the marble countertop and the tile floor. I think I just saw my kitchen give off one of those cartoon twinkles you see in TV ads.

Oh, the humidity!

According to Debra, a sanitized bathroom is all about precleaning: soap scum on the tub, hair-spray residue on the counter; the toilet rim speaks for itself. We spray product (multipurpose or stone cleaner, depending) and let it sit for five minutes.

As the toilet bowl soaks, Debra attacks my globe lights and vents with a high duster. Evidently the vents were last dusted in the Age of Disco, because a frightening cloud of dust is released. Debra seems satisfied, and when the dust literally settles, she finishes wiping off surfaces with the microfiber cloths. "I give these as gifts," she says, "along with the pumice toilet-bowl cleaners."

"Everybody must look forward to Christmas at your house," I say.

I discover that my soap dish comes apart for cleaning. Also, you may have a product formulated to remove soap scum from a glass shower door, but a spray bottle of heated water (½ cup), dish detergent (a few drops), and vinegar (1 teaspoon) works, too.

As I microfiber the shit out of my bathroom surfaces, Debra takes out a device called the Lil' Chizler. It's just what it sounds like. I chisel into the seams of the sink, countertop, and faucet handles. It's as satisfying as cleaning your fingernails and a whole new arena for finding dirt.

While we work, I have to ask: What's the worst thing Debra has ever found while cleaning a house? "One time, syrup had spilled in the back of a cabinet," she says. That's it? I was imagining a dead, flattened raccoon or something. I think Debra doesn't want to be gossiping about clients, the way a therapist would be tight-lipped about patients. I press. "Well, there have been times you're in a bathroom and think it's a black shower," she says. "Then, after cleaning a while, you realize it's a white shower." That's gratifying. And it lets me off the hook. I'm pretty sure the worst I can be accused of is a white shower that looks more like eggshell.

THE MAGIC 14

Merry Maids–approved picks, in case you want to amass the ultimate cleaning kit

1 SOFT SCRUB TOTAL ALL PURPOSE CLEANSER WITH BLEACH. Longer-lasting than sprays, this cream cleanser dissolves grime on counters, stovetops, and bathroom tile.
2 WINDEX. The classic, for giving mirrors and glass a no-streak shine.
3 NATURALLY STUNNING GRANITE AND STONE CLEANER. A strong, nontoxic solution that won't erode stone.
4 SOFT SCRUB TOTAL BATH & BOWL SPRAY. Ultra-effective at keeping toilets, sinks, and tubs germ-free.
5 NATURALLY POWER-POLISHING STAINLESS STEEL POLISH. A nontoxic grease-cutter formulated for stainless steel.
6 LIBMAN MICROFIBER CLOTHS. These durable dirt-lifters are also super-absorbent for spills.
7 MR. CLEAN FINISHED FLOOR CLEANER. A no-rinse solution for soiled floors that won't dull surfaces.
8 CLEANMAX ZOOM. A hard-working vacuum that weighs only eight pounds.
9 FRESH WAVE HOME SPRAY NEUTRALIZER. Spritz the drain, garbage cans, pet beds, furniture, and more to erase odors.
10 SHARK STEAM & SPRAY PRO MOP. A microfiber pad helps this tool clean without leaving residue.
11 LYSOL TOILET BRUSH. It has extra bristles angled to reach under a toilet's rim.
12 PUMIE TOILET BOWL RING REMOVER. A pumice-on-a-stick that removes rust and lime buildup.
13 MR. CLEAN MAGIC ERASER. This melamine-foam sponge tackles wall marks like no other.
14 LIL' CHIZLER. A slim plastic scraper that fits into crevices to dig out dirt.

TO BUY: Find a one-click shopping list at realsimple.com/cleanbetter.

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* In separate independent studies commissioned by Blue Buffalo, BLUE Naturally Fresh Quick-Clumping, Multi-Cat Quick-Clumping, Alpine Meadow® Scented Multi-Cat Quick-Clumping, Herbal Attraction® Quick-Clumping, Ultra Odor Control Multi-Cat and Kitten Training litters were found to: (i) have a liquid absorption capacity at least three times greater per ounce than the leading clay-based litter; (ii) control ammonia odors better than the leading clumping litters; and (iii) form harder clumps than the leading pine, corn and wheat clumping litters.

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Q.

Pack-rat pup

My dog doesn't care about her toys but steals other objects in our house and puts them in her bed. Help!

L.S., via Facebook

A. It's not that your dog prefers socks over squeaky toys. Stealing your stuff can sometimes be a dog's way of asserting herself—possessing your items makes her feel dominant—but most often it's just a form of play. "She knows you'll come after it, which gives her attention," says animal trainer Mikkel Becker. Each time, instead of yelling or chasing her, try a distraction—ringing the doorbell, reaching for her leash—and she'll probably drop the item. As you pick it up, offer a chew toy and praise her. After several weeks of positive reinforcement, she should be more drawn to dog toys than to your things. It can also help to put the items that she repeatedly goes after out of sight, says veterinarian Gayle O'Konski: "Changing things up like that can snap a dog out of a set behavior."

Q.

Hunger games

How do I get my puppy to slow down when he's eating and chew his food? He acts like he's starving and swallows it whole in about 30 seconds.

J.R., via Facebook

A. Puppies instinctively race through meals because they come from litters, and typically "whoever eats the fastest gets the most food," says O'Konski. Some breeds, like Labradors, golden retrievers, and beagles, are inherently speedy eaters, says Becker. Because eating too fast can lead to health issues (indigestion, vomiting, even potentially fatal conditions), it's important to train a dog to slow down. Try dividing his meal into quarters and waiting 10 minutes between servings, says veterinarian Patrick Mahaney. Or serve meals in the Slow Down Feeding Bowl ($16, brake-fast.net) or a six-cup muffin tin. The challenge of working the kibble out of the smaller slots will force him to savor dinner.

THE PET EXPERTS

MIKKEL BECKER, certified animal trainer for Vetstreet.com.

PATRICK MAHANEY, V.M.D., California Pet Acupuncture and Wellness, Los Angeles.

GAYLE O'KONSKI, D.V.M., Morris Animal Hospital, Granger, Indiana.

ANDY ROARK, D.V.M., Cleveland Park Animal Hospital, Greenville, South Carolina.

Q.

Catnap quirk

My eight-year-old kitty likes to sleep on newspaper advertisements. Why?

C.O., via Facebook

A. Chances are, your cat first landed on the classifieds because she saw you eyeing them. "Cats are curious by nature, so they'll pounce. Then they realize that they like the paper's crunchy sound and shredding potential, so the habit sticks," says O'Konski. Another enticement, notes Becker: When a cat is lying on it, newspaper absorbs her body warmth, "turning it into a 'heated bed' of sorts." The paper-hogging isn't necessarily a problem, says veterinarian Andy Roark, but if you want your cat to quit it, try swapping the paper for a product that mimics its features, like a warming mat (K&H Thermo-Kitty Mat, $47, wayfair.com) or a play mat that makes a crunching sound (Kong Active Cat Play Mat, $16, amazon.com).

Written by
Sarah Grossbart

Photograph by
Andrew Knapp

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FULL BLOOM

Looking for a new floral scent? We gathered a dozen roses, peonies, and more, just in time for spring.

Written by
Heather Muir

Photographs by
Jonathon Kambouris

1

1
SWEET
Eau de Lacoste L.12.12 Pour Elle Sparkling tops its lily of the valley note with blackberry and cotton candy (yum). But it isn't too cloying, thanks to a warm, musky finish.
TO BUY: $59 for 1.6 ounces, kohls.com.

2
FRESH
If you want some Zen with your scent, try **Marc Jacobs Cucumber Splash,** which has a relaxing effect. The floral note feminizes the crisp cucumber.
TO BUY: $62 for 3.4 ounces, saksfifthavenue.com.

3
WOODY
Molton Brown Dewy Lily of the Valley & Star Anise Eau de Toilette is soft yet spicy. To make it last all day, first lather on unscented body lotion, then spritz.
TO BUY: $65 for 1.7 ounces, moltonbrown.com.

2

3

LILY OF THE VALLEY

Thought of as a symbol of good luck and well wishes, this clean, sweet-smelling flower is often carried by brides and royalty. Although it's impossible to extract scent from the flower through distillation, perfumers re-create it.

PROP STYLING BY LINDA KEIL FOR HALLEY RESOURCES, INC.

A HAIR DO
Hair is great at holding on to scent. Just mist fragrance onto a brush, then run it through.

1
FRUITY
XO, Victoria Eau de Parfum has fresh peony plus the sweet juiciness of lady apple. FYI: Avoid rubbing your wrists together after spraying; heat and friction can alter the scent.
TO BUY: $68 for 3.4 ounces, victoriassecret.com.

2
MUSKY
Not really a floral person? **Clean Reserve Blonde Rose** might change your mind. Sure, there's peony and rose, but the cedarwood, sandalwood, and musk base notes make for a slightly masculine finish.
TO BUY: $90 for 3.4 ounces, sephora.com.

3
CITRUSY
Zesty lemon oil in **Avon Little Black Dress** offers a tangy twist, while jasmine gives it an exotic flair.
TO BUY: $25 for 1.7 ounces, avon.com.

MAKE IT LAST
The inner wrists aren't the only places to apply perfume. Try the insides of the elbows. These warm, moist spots keep perfume fresh.

PEONY

Beloved for their fluffy blooms, peonies can grow to more than 10 inches in diameter. And the scent is equally big—a full-bodied, creamy, feminine floral that's often paired with rose.

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FREESIA

Native to South Africa, this tubular-shaped flower has a crisp, peppery scent and comes in a range of colors, including yellow, pink, red, and blue mauve.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH WHITE TEA?
Tea-infused fragrances are gaining popularity, thanks to their refreshing qualities. White tea is known for its delicate and sweet aroma.

GET A WHIFF OF THIS
When testing a fragrance, wait until it dries before smelling. If not, you'll smell only the top notes, which fade the fastest.

1
SENSUAL
Giorgio Armani Si Rose Signature Eau de Parfum opens with a sweet burst of freesia and black currant and finishes with a sexy trio of vanilla, rose, and patchouli.
TO BUY: $120 for 3.4 ounces, giorgioarmanibeauty-usa.com.

2
HERBAL
Imagine sipping an Arnold Palmer on the front porch—**Korres White Tea Bergamot Freesia Eau de Toilette** is that light and refreshing.
TO BUY: $38.50 for 1.69 ounces, sephora.com.

3
SPICY
An update on the original, **Elizabeth Taylor White Diamonds Night Eau de Toilette** is flashy like its bottle (with sparkling mandarin) yet timeless (with freesia).
TO BUY: $68 for 3.3 ounces, macys.com.

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ROSE

This iconic flower has represented feminine beauty for centuries and is often used in fragrance because it mixes so well with other notes. Today's scents are less grandma, more glamorous.

PLAY IT COOL
Heat and humidity affect perfume, so store it in the refrigerator or in another cool, dark place, like on a closet shelf (*not* in the bathroom).

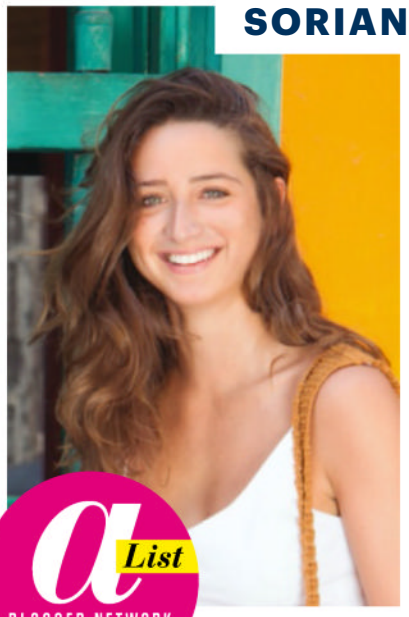
COMING UP ROSES
Rose Valley, in Bulgaria, is one of world's largest producers of rose oil.

1
CLEAN
Perfumers used white roses (instead of pink or red) to give **Chloé Eau de Toilette** a fresher smell. The honey base note lingers long after you mist in on.
TO BUY: $115 for 2.5 ounces, sephora.com.

2
POWDERY
Narciso Rodriguez Narciso Eau de Parfum Poudrée mixes Bulgarian rose with a powdery musk that's reminiscent of a baby's skin. Line your dresser drawers with tissue paper, then spray it to scent your clothes between washings.
TO BUY: $114 for 3 ounces, bloomingdales.com.

3
GOURMAND
Vera Bradley Eau de Toilette in Macaroon Rose is dessert-like at first but softens as it dries down to its sandalwood base.
TO BUY: $48 for 1.7 ounces, verabradley.com.

MEET THE BLOGGER: **CRISTINA SORIANO**



Cristina Soriano is the home décor aficionado and style addict behind **cristinasoriano.com**. With a background in the fashion industry, her blog celebrates all things home, entertaining, and design. Born in the Philippines with Spanish descent, she finds beauty in bright colors and playful yet elegant tablescapes. If DIY is your forte—rejoice! Cristina is always painting, gluing, or crafting something sure to be innovative and creative.

To Cristina, the home is the single most important place in one's life, and should therefore be glorified, adorned, and celebrated. She finds inspiration in her happy mix of cultures, integrating them within her current home—New York City. Find laughter, flowers, and lots of power tool tips with Cristina—for her, the home starts with the heart.

FACEBOOK: Cristina Soriano

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– Patricia, Cheektowga, NY

"I liked the matte finish it left, without leaving my skin looking dry."

– Nicole, Dublin, CA

"It was the nicest blender I've used."

– Donetta, St. Louis, MO

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75% claimed that the blender was easy to use.

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Adriana is wearing New Dream Velvet™ Foundation in Natural Beige.
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PRETTY SMART

The latest beauty products and tips that save time, money, and—best of all—your sanity.

Written by Heather Muir
Photographs by Ralph Smith

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SCENT OF A ~~WINDOW~~ WOMAN

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JUST PLAIN FUN.

A little lamb

Petrolatum- and fragrance-free, **Lano 101 Ointment** ($19, net-a-porter.com) is 100 percent natural and contains medical-grade lanolin (a cruelty-free by-product of wool). The Australian import helps heal dry lips, cuts, and ragged cuticles.

Fuller hair (brush)

Travel brushes tend to have a tiny head suited for a baby doll. **Wet Brush Pop Fold** ($13, thewetbrush.com) is the same size as the cult-favorite original (which painlessly detangles wet hair) but folds up, using only half the space.

Golden girl

Vita Liberata Self Tanning Anti Age Serum ($45, sephora.com) has peptides to firm and dihydroxyacetone (a sugar that interacts with amino acids in the skin) to produce pigment. So in a few hours, skin looks smoother and sun-kissed.

Private eye

Smaller than a credit card (and almost as skinny), **Stowaway Cosmetics The Essential Eye Palette** ($25, stowawaycosmetics.com) stores eight neutral shadows, a black shadow that doubles as eyeliner, and a double-sided brush.

Grab and go

Known for its ability to hold a ponytail in place without snagging, leaving a kink, or causing a headache, the **Invisibobble** now comes in **Nano** size ($7 for three, nordstrom.com), ideal for securing skinny sections of hair (like the end of a braid).

AN ARTIFICIAL RESIN PREVENTS BACTERIA FROM FORMING, SO YOU CAN GET THE HAIR TIE WET.

Make a splash

Dr. Jart+ Water Drop Hydrating Moisturizer ($36, sephora.com) squirts out of the tube like a thick cream, but when you rub it in, water droplets burst (woo!), changing the texture to a light liquid that hydrates and brightens with green tea.

PROP STYLING BY JULIE FLYNN FOR HALLEY RESOURCES, INC.

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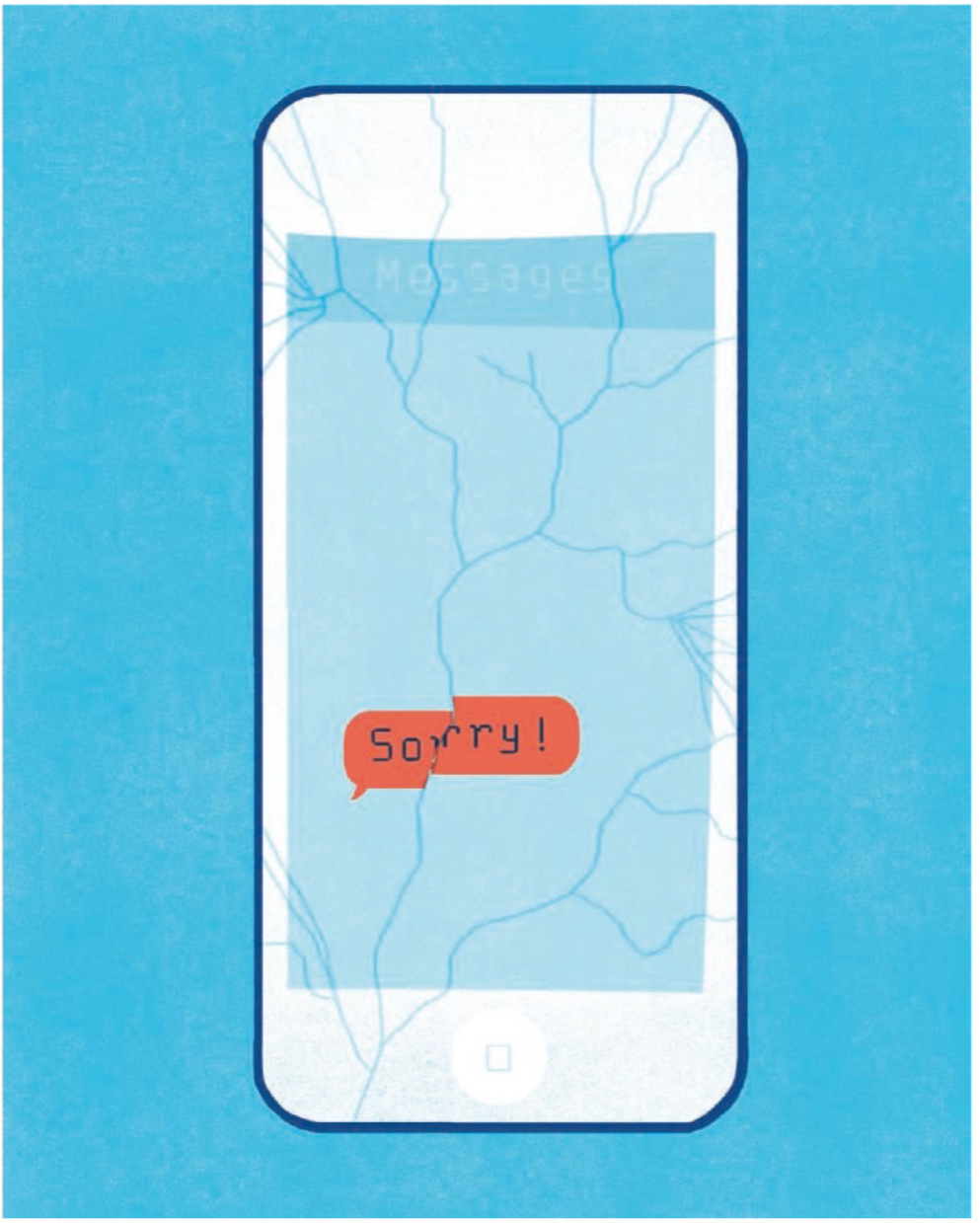
IT'S HARD FOR ME TO SAY, "I'M SORRY"

It really, really is. And it's especially hard to do it well. (Sorry to say, most of us are lousy at it.) Apologizing takes humility, courage, and good timing. Here's how you—and your kids—can master a sincere mea culpa.



I'm sorry. These two little words can act as the superglue of relationships, repairing everything from stealing the last brownie to, in the most hopeful scenario, painful betrayals. "None of us are perfect. You have to be able to apologize when you mess up. Otherwise you'll scatter bad feelings wherever you go," says Lauren Bloom, an interfaith minister, an attorney, and the author of *The Art of the Apology*. So why does everyone from that red-faced kid on the baseball field to your brooding spouse have such a hard time spitting out the words? And when it's your turn to make amends, how do you offer a truly meaningful apology that doesn't sound as if you're just fishing for a quick get-out-of-jail-free card? (Hint: "Mistakes were made" doesn't cut it.) The following pages will guide you. It's never easy—no matter how old you are—but if you screw up, just apologize. And try again.

Written by Jennifer King Lindley
Illustrations by Christopher Silas Neal

Why apologizing is good for you

Humans are wired for it. Conciliatory gestures, like apologies, evolved to help us restore important relationships that have been damaged by conflict, according to Michael McCullough, Ph.D., the author of *Beyond Revenge: The Evolution of the Forgiveness Instinct.* (Chimpanzees, for example, often embrace former adversaries after a fight.) Apologies also boost our trust in the other person. A study by Harvard Business School found that when a researcher prefaced a request to use a stranger's cell phone with an unsolicited and unrelated apology—"I'm sorry about the rain!"—he was offered the phone 47 percent of the time compared with just 9 percent when he didn't first voice the regret. Even this impersonal apology was enough to demonstrate his concern for the other person's situation, thus increasing the stranger's trust, the researchers theorized. (Such instant bonding may be why we often have the impulse to apologize for things that are clearly not our fault: "I'm sorry this elevator is taking so long," you offer to the sighing passenger beside you.) In addition to strengthening relationships, a good apology has benefits for both individual parties. For the wounded, receiving an apology can be a first step toward forgiveness, a state linked to a host of benefits, from a lower risk of depression to improved cardiovascular health. For the offender, for whom it's painful to realize that you've caused another harm, apologies act as a salve for a troubled conscience.

Why are we so loath to do it? "We want the social harmony that apologizing brings. We just don't like the act of apologizing itself," says Ryan Fehr, Ph.D., a professor of management at the University of Washington, in Seattle, who has done extensive research on the subject. "That's because we like to think of ourselves as decent people. *I'm a good person. I was just distracted when I did that.* The act of clearly claiming responsibility for an offense can be difficult because you have to change how you view yourself," he says. "So we are better at making excuses than we are at apologies." The thing is, you're fooling yourself: A sincere apology can actually *restore* your self-worth. "It clearly separates the person from the offense. Your action was bad, but you're not a bad person," says Fehr. Another obstacle to apologizing: feeling vulnerable. You acted like a drunken baboon at your in-laws' dinner party, and revisiting it in an apology makes you feel ashamed. It will blow over, right? Well, your in-laws aren't going to simply forget, and "you just draw out the guilt and embarrassment the longer you don't apologize," says Bloom. So what are you waiting for?

Strategies for success

For minor infractions, like being 10 minutes late for a coffee date with a friend, a rueful "I'm so sorry—traffic was nuts!" will do it. But, says etiquette expert Arden Clise, the author of *Spinach in Your Boss's Teeth: Etiquette for Professional Success,* "the bigger the offense, the bigger the apology required." That holds true whether you are apologizing to a friend, a coworker, or, often toughest of all, your spouse. Experts agree that the apologies most likely to be accepted by the other person include some key elements, outlined here. But take heart, even a clumsy attempt can be powerful if heartfelt. "People highly value sincerity," says Tamar Chansky, Ph.D., a psychologist in the greater Philadelphia area and the author of *Freeing Yourself From Anxiety.* "Being honest by saying, 'Gosh, this is so hard. I'm not quite sure how to say this to you,' demonstrates how important you take this."

MAKE IT TIMELY. In general, you want to apologize as soon as possible after an incident. A delay can indicate insincerity. Why did it take you so long? But if emotions are running high, "wait until the lava stops flowing," says Bloom. Cool off so you can apologize sincerely. That said, there is no statute of limitations. If a friend has fallen to the bottom of your priority list and you haven't called her in months, she may be impressed that you overcame those months of silence to make the effort.

EXPRESS REGRET. It's basic but crucial: State how much you regret what you did. Otherwise you come across as only trying to justify your bad behavior. Jennifer Thomas, Ph.D., a psychologist in North Caro-

I didn't talk
for a very long time
Jacob Sanchez
Diagnosed with autism
Lack of speech is a sign of autism. Learn the others at autismspeaks.org/signs.
AUTISM SPEAKS

lina and a coauthor of *When Sorry Isn't Enough,* favors opening with the phrase "I apologize" instead of "Sorry." "*Sorry* is a very vanilla word—we use it every time we bump into someone's cart in the supermarket," she says. Then focus on the other person, not on how bad *you* feel: "I apologize that I snapped at you during our meeting this morning. I was totally out of line. I can understand why you would be upset about how I acted." To pave the way for a more heartfelt apology, try a little self-affirmation beforehand. A study published in *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* asked some subjects to write about an aspect of their identities that was very important to them (for example, creativity or membership in a close-knit family). Another group did no such warm-up. Afterward all the subjects were told to think of a time when they had hurt someone but had left it unresolved. Then they were instructed to write an apology. The result: Those who had done the feel-good affirmation beforehand composed better, less defensive apologies than those who had not. "By affirming another source of worth in their lives, people felt less threatened about the idea of apologizing," says Karina Schumann, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at the University of Pittsburgh.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY. Use the active voice, says Fehr. (Wrong: "It's unfortunate that there was a misunderstanding." Right: "I'm so sorry that I didn't invite you to our wedding and you felt excluded.") Be specific so the victim knows you are aware of exactly how you have wronged him and doesn't think you are just trying to sweep things aside with an off-the-rack nicety. Often the other person is not blameless. You may fear that apologizing means you are assuming all the fault in an ugly back-and-forth. Even so, be the big person and start the ball rolling, says Bloom: "Apologize for your part in the problem: 'I should not have started yelling. I'm sorry that I turned what should have been a chance for us to work together into a fight.'" Often your willingness to own up will break down the other person's defenses, and she will follow suit. Says Chansky, "We are afraid we are going to

OOPS, MY BAD: 5 COMMON APOLOGY MISTAKES

1. APOLOGIZING BY TEXT OR E-MAIL
As a rule, in-person apologies are most effective. The other person can hear your tone of voice and read your body language—no crossed arms!—as proof of your sincerity. Plus, you have the chance to listen to her side. It's fine to send a text that says, "Boy, was I a jerk! Can I take you out for a coffee and apologize?" An exception may be if the person won't see you or if you have a lot to explain and want to write it down in a letter so you don't forget anything. (In that case, consider reading it out loud to her rather than mailing it.)

2. MAKING EXCUSES (TO JUSTIFY YOUR MISTAKE)
Avoid peppering your apology with "but's" that prevent you from taking responsibility: "I'm sorry I blew up, but you really struck a nerve when you criticized my parenting."

3. APOLOGIZING WHEN YOU DON'T REALLY MEAN IT
A false apology benefits no one, says Lauren Bloom. If you told your brother that his wife is a meddling know-it-all, don't apologize if you can't do it sincerely (that is, his wife really is a meddling know-it-all, and you haven't changed your mind). Rather, apologize for the piece of conflict that you do regret. Say to him, "I'm so sorry I said that to you. I love you, and I was way out of line telling you that about Lisa."

4. SAYING "I'M SORRY YOU FEEL THAT WAY"
Translation: You are way too sensitive. You are just shifting the blame away from you and onto the victim.

5. EXPECTING AN INSTANT FIX
It may take the other person time to process her feelings, so don't end with "I'm glad this is behind us" or "Now we can make the past the past," says Jennifer Thomas.

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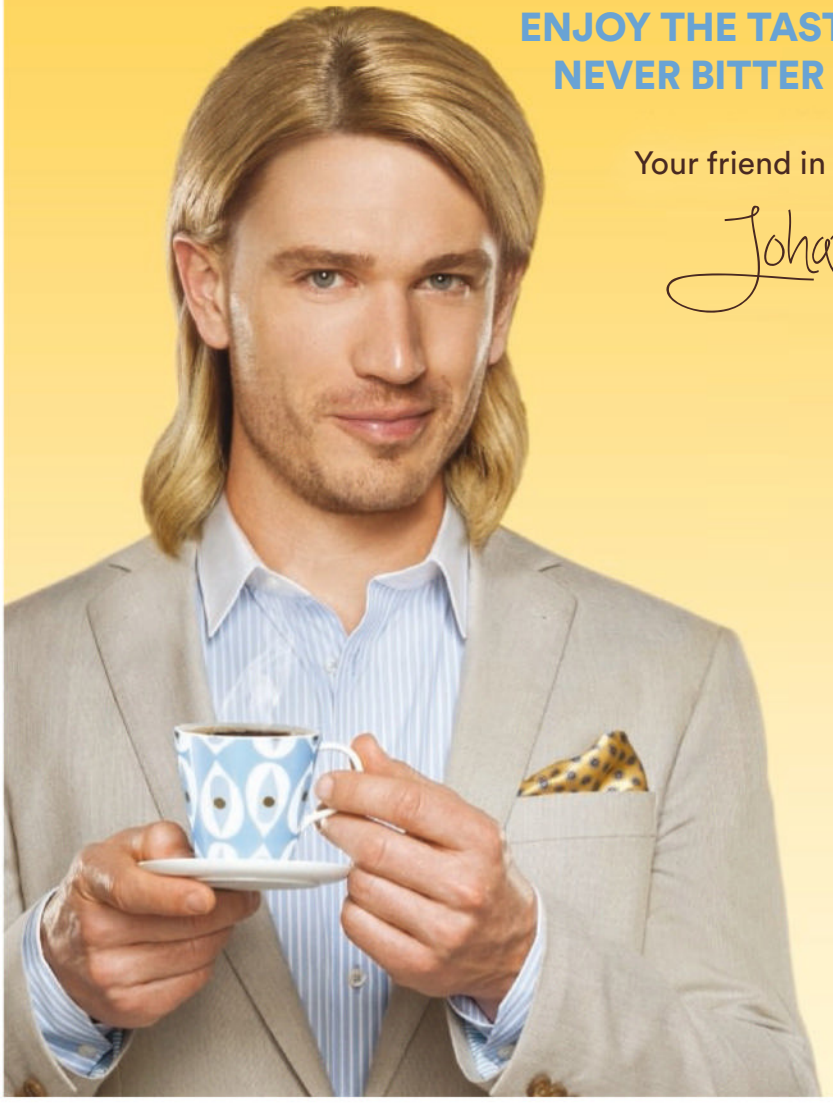

Based on a January 2016 national taste test of coffee drinkers conducted by an independent third party comparing Gevalia House Blend and Starbucks House Blend.

get sliced and diced. Instead, apologizing can be a moment of real connection." That's true even if you think you are the one in this mess who deserves the real apology. "Ask yourself, 'What is going to make me feel better sooner? Being on hold? Or taking action?'" Chansky says. "Don't think about what's most fair. Think about what's most freeing."

LISTEN. Apologies are not meant to be monologues. "The best apologies are conversations," says Bloom. The offended person needs to be able to air how the wrong made her feel so she can put it behind her. As painful as it might be, you need to listen to the other person's side and try to empathize with her experience.

MAKE AMENDS. Excluded a friend from a girls' dinner? Make a date with her. Lost your sister's yoga mat? Deliver your regret with a new one in hand. But, again, bring your listening ear. "If you broke one of your mother's treasured family heirlooms, she isn't wanting to hear you just say, '*Whoops,* here's $20,'" says Fehr. She wants you to express concern for how upset she is and how it could affect your relationship with her (and maybe to offer to wield the Elmer's). If you missed your daughter's recital, offer to watch her perform in the living room. Bloom is not a fan of sending flowers. "It can come off as a bribe," she says.

DON'T ASK FOR FORGIVENESS. An apology is a debt that needs to be paid, says Bloom. "That is why we say, 'I owe you an apology.' Forgiveness is a gift," she says. The other person may feel put on the spot if you say, "Do you forgive me?" It can seem as if you have an ulterior motive, says Fehr: "I want you to forgive me so I don't have to be in this uncomfortable situation anymore." You can express a wish. "I hope you can forgive me." A safer tack may be to conclude by letting the person know how much you value the relationship, says Thomas: "It pains me that I hurt you because you are my best friend. I don't laugh as much with anyone else."

PREPARE FOR IT TO BE HARDER WITH YOUR SPOUSE. "There's so much history and baggage," says Chansky. If you said something nasty in anger at dinner last night, your spouse will now be scrolling through every painful barb from arguments past. Take a deep breath and acknowledge that history, Chansky advises: "I know I can't make up for all the times I have blown this with you, but from the bottom of my heart, I feel really bad about this. I know I need to fix this." And then—the tough part—work hard to do so.

WALK THE WALK. Your future actions will either validate the sincerity of your apology or put it into question, says Nick Smith, Ph.D., a professor of philosophy at the University of New Hampshire, in Durham, and the author of *I Was Wrong: The Meanings of Apologies.* You don't have to keep apologizing over and over for the same transgression. If the person doesn't accept it the first time, let the matter cool for a while, then try once more, says Bloom. Some distance can allow a friend to put your offense in perspective. If you still note a lingering frost, even after she said that all's well, it's OK to ask, "Is there more I can do to make it up to you?"

"An apology is a debt that needs to be paid. That is why we say, 'I owe you an apology.' Forgiveness is a gift."

Heartgard® Plus
(ivermectin/pyrantel)
CHEWABLES

CAUTION: Federal (U.S.A.) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

INDICATIONS: For use in dogs to prevent canine heartworm disease by eliminating the tissue stage of heartworm larvae (*Dirofilaria immitis*) for a month (30 days) after infection and for the treatment and control of ascarids (*Toxocara canis, Toxascaris leonina*) and hookworms (*Ancylostoma caninum, Uncinaria stenocephala, Ancylostoma braziliense*).

DOSAGE: HEARTGARD® Plus (ivermectin/pyrantel) should be administered orally at monthly intervals at the recommended minimum dose level of 6 mcg of ivermectin per kilogram (2.72 mcg/lb) and 5 mg of pyrantel (as pamoate salt) per kg (2.27 mg/lb) of body weight. The recommended dosing schedule for prevention of canine heartworm disease and for the treatment and control of ascarids and hookworms is as follows:

Dog Weight	Chewables Per Month	Ivermectin Content	Pyrantel Content	Color Coding On Foil Backing and Carton
Up to 25 lb	1	68 mcg	57 mg	Blue
26 to 50 lb	1	136 mcg	114 mg	Green
51 to 100 lb	1	272 mcg	227 mg	Brown

HEARTGARD Plus is recommended for dogs 6 weeks of age and older.
For dogs over 100 lb use the appropriate combination of these chewables.

ADMINISTRATION: Remove only one chewable at a time from the foil-backed blister card. Return the card with the remaining chewables to its box to protect the product from light. Because most dogs find HEARTGARD Plus palatable, the product can be offered to the dog by hand. Alternatively, it may be added intact to a small amount of dog food. The chewable should be administered in a manner that encourages the dog to chew, rather than to swallow without chewing. Chewables may be broken into pieces and fed to dogs that normally swallow treats whole.

Care should be taken that the dog consumes the complete dose, and treated animals should be observed for a few minutes after administration to ensure that part of the dose is not lost or rejected. If it is suspected that any of the dose has been lost, redosing is recommended.

HEARTGARD Plus should be given at monthly intervals during the period of the year when mosquitoes (vectors), potentially carrying infective heartworm larvae, are active. The initial dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog's first exposure to mosquitoes. The final dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog's last exposure to mosquitoes.

When replacing another heartworm preventive product in a heartworm disease preventive program, the first dose of HEARTGARD Plus must be given within a month (30 days) of the last dose of the former medication.

If the interval between doses exceeds a month (30 days), the efficacy of ivermectin can be reduced. Therefore, for optimal performance, the chewable must be given once a month on or about the same day of the month. If treatment is delayed, whether by a few days or many, immediate treatment with HEARTGARD Plus and resumption of the recommended dosing regimen will minimize the opportunity for the development of adult heartworms.

Monthly treatment with HEARTGARD Plus also provides effective treatment and control of ascarids (*T. canis, T. leonina*) and hookworms (*A. caninum, U. stenocephala, A. braziliense*). Clients should be advised of measures to be taken to prevent reinfection with intestinal parasites.

EFFICACY: HEARTGARD Plus Chewables, given orally using the recommended dose and regimen, are effective against the tissue larval stage of *D.immitis* for a month (30 days) after infection and, as a result, prevent the development of the adult stage. HEARTGARD Plus Chewables are also effective against canine ascarids (*T. canis, T. leonina*) and hookworms (*A. caninum, U. stenocephala, A. braziliense*).

ACCEPTABILITY: In acceptability and field trials, HEARTGARD Plus was shown to be an acceptable oral dosage form that was consumed at first offering by the majority of dogs.

PRECAUTIONS: All dogs should be tested for existing heartworm infection before starting treatment with HEARTGARD Plus which is not effective against adult *D. immitis*. Infected dogs must be treated to remove adult heartworms and microfilariae before initiating a program with HEARTGARD Plus.

While some microfilariae may be killed by the ivermectin in HEARTGARD Plus at the recommended dose level, HEARTGARD Plus is not effective for microfilariae clearance. A mild hypersensitivity-type reaction, presumably due to dead or dying microfilariae and particularly involving a transient diarrhea, has been observed in clinical trials with ivermectin alone after treatment of some dogs that have circulating microfilariae.

Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children.
In case of ingestion by humans, clients should be advised to contact a physician immediately. Physicians may contact a Poison Control Center for advice concerning cases of ingestion by humans.

Store between 68°F - 77°F (20°C - 25°C). Excursions between 59°F - 86°F (15°C - 30°C) are permitted. Protect product from light.

ADVERSE REACTIONS: In clinical field trials with HEARTGARD Plus, vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours of dosing was rarely observed (1.1% of administered doses). The following adverse reactions have been reported following the use of HEARTGARD: Depression/lethargy, vomiting, anorexia, diarrhea, mydriasis, ataxia, staggering, convulsions and hypersalivation.

SAFETY: HEARTGARD Plus has been shown to be bioequivalent to HEARTGARD, with respect to the bioavailability of ivermectin. The dose regimens of HEARTGARD Plus and HEARTGARD are the same with regard to ivermectin (6 mcg/kg). Studies with ivermectin indicate that certain dogs of the Collie breed are more sensitive to the effects of ivermectin administered at elevated dose levels (more than 16 times the target use level) than dogs of other breeds. At elevated doses, sensitive dogs showed adverse reactions which included mydriasis, depression, ataxia, tremors, drooling, paresis, recumbency, excitability, stupor, coma and death. HEARTGARD demonstrated no signs of toxicity at 10 times the recommended dose (60 mcg/kg) in sensitive Collies. Results of these trials and bioequivalency studies, support the safety of HEARTGARD products in dogs, including Collies, when used as recommended.

HEARTGARD Plus has shown a wide margin of safety at the recommended dose level in dogs, including pregnant or breeding bitches, stud dogs and puppies aged 6 or more weeks. In clinical trials, many commonly used flea collars, dips, shampoos, anthelmintics, antibiotics, vaccines and steroid preparations have been administered with HEARTGARD Plus in a heartworm disease prevention program.

In one trial, where some pups had parvovirus, there was a marginal reduction in efficacy against intestinal nematodes, possibly due to a change in intestinal transit time.

HOW SUPPLIED: HEARTGARD Plus is available in three dosage strengths (See DOSAGE section) for dogs of different weights. Each strength comes in convenient cartons of 6 and 12 chewables.

For customer service, please contact Merial at 1-888-637-4251.

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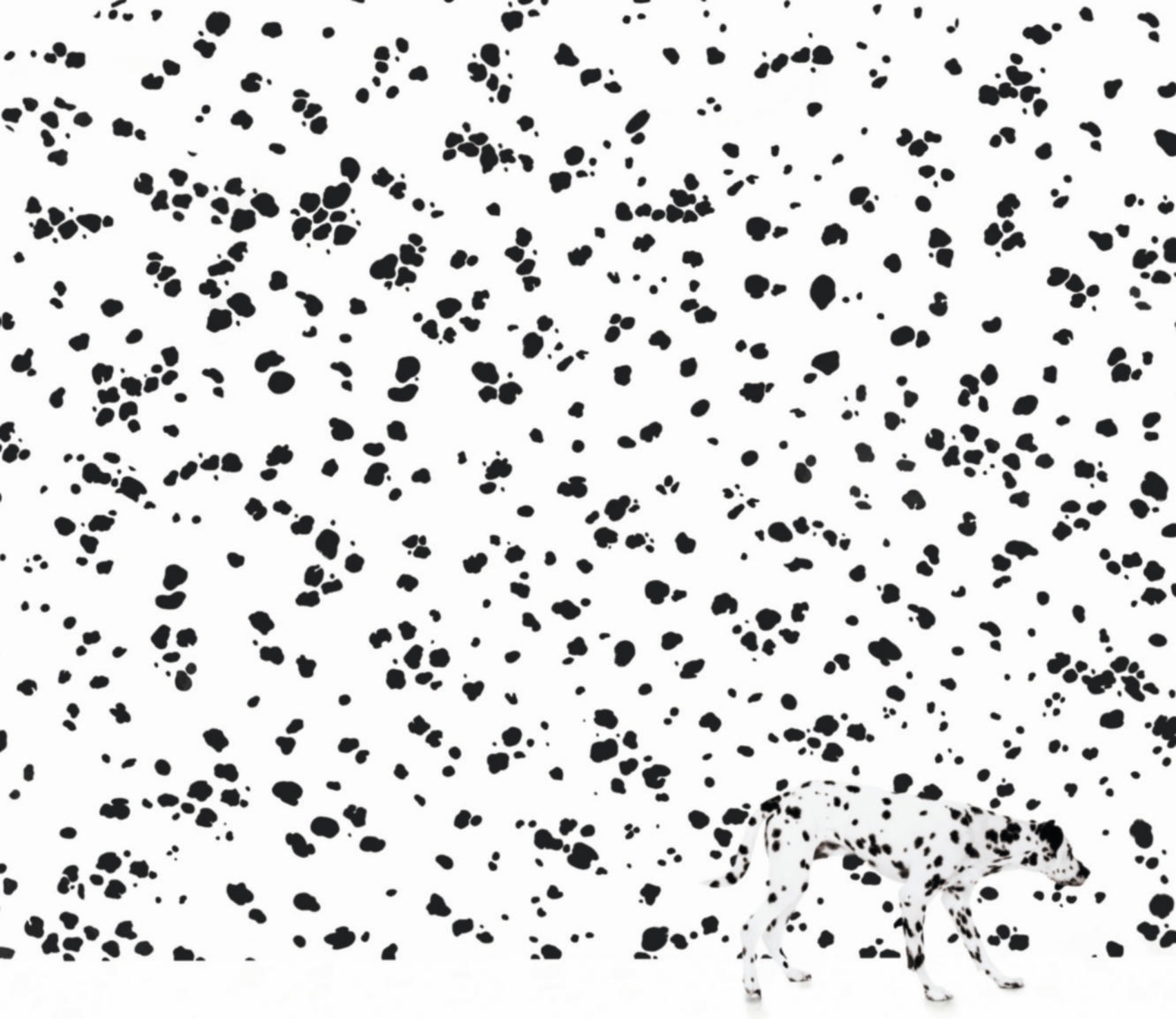

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Heartgard® Plus
(ivermectin/pyrantel)

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION: HEARTGARD Plus is well tolerated. All dogs should be tested for heartworm infection before starting a preventive program. Following the use of HEARTGARD Plus, digestive and neurological side effects have rarely been reported. For more information, contact your veterinarian or see next page for full prescribing information.

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HOW TO TEACH YOUR KIDS TO SAY SORRY

The most important thing you can do to raise a gracious apologizer is—you know it's coming—be a role model. That means apologizing to your spouse at the dinner table, yes, but also to your child when you lose it because he can't find his glasses for the 413th time. (Try "I'm so sorry I yelled at you. I'm the grown-up here, and I bet that scared you. Let me try a do-over right now.") "Some parents worry that by apologizing, they lose authority," says Laura Markham, Ph.D., the author of *Peaceful Parents, Happy Kids.* "In fact, kids lose respect for parents who lose control and *don't* apologize."

LITTLE KIDS

When your three-year-old grabs another kid's truck, your natural tendency—if only to avoid looking like the Worst Parent in the World—is to march your child over and demand, "Say you are sorry *right now!*" But forcing him to say the words and shaming him in the process doesn't help, says Markham. Use the encounter to teach empathy. Putting yourself in someone else's shoes is a still-fledgling skill at this age, but it is the crucial foundation of getting along with others—the whole point of apologizing in the first place. First "connect before you correct," says Markham. Listen to your child's side, then ask, "How do you think Lily feels right now? What can you do to make her feel better?" (He'll probably say a hug.) If your child is still too mad or sad to feel remorse, walk over to the victim together and do the talking yourself: "We are very sorry that happened. It was hard for Sam to resist grabbing your cool toy. It must have made you upset. Here's your truck back." Kids will eventually learn that apologies lead to everyone feeling better and they'll give them willingly.

BIGGER KIDS

By the time they're five or so, most kids understand the social rule that if you hurt someone, you need to say you're sorry. In fact, some have learned it so well that they try to use it as a free pass (the snooty "*Sorrryyy!*"). When you catch them being insincere (and, no, you won't be around all the time), call them on it. Bloom says to her own daughter, "Come on now, that's not real. Let's make this real." Even older kids may need a cooling-off time. "My daughter used to say, 'I can apologize later, but I can't apologize right now,'" says Markham. "That's great—apologize when you mean it." Most important, help your child focus on ways he can repair the damage. In a study published in the journal *Social Development,* six- and seven-year-olds who got help rebuilding a plastic-cup tower from a researcher who had "accidentally" knocked it over felt better than did those who received only a verbal apology.

TEENAGERS

Wanting to belong to the group gives teenagers a natural incentive to apologize to their peers. To parents and siblings? Not so much. Apologizing takes a lot of what psychologists call emotional regulation—calming down and considering the other person's feelings—something turbulent teens often struggle with. Teens are also thin-skinned and vulnerable. When a teenager hears "Get out here and apologize!" what she's really hearing is "Admit you are a bad person." Don't start a power struggle of yes-you-will-no-I-won't. If your teenager has done something egregious without owning up, like denting the car, and you know that no apology is forthcoming, (calmly) focus instead on how he plans to help fix things.

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10 STRATEGIES FOR A HAPPIER ALLERGY SEASON

And not one of them is "live in a bubble."

Written by
Tula Karras

Photograph by
Ralph Smith

IF SPRING'S TREE POLLENS are making your eyes water, you're in good (if miserable) company. "Up to 30 percent of Americans have allergies, compared to 10 percent in 1970," says Leo Galland, an internist in New York City and the author of *The Allergy Solution*. Numerous studies connect the increase to climate change (extended growing seasons mean more pollens), air pollution (people in high-traffic areas have a higher incidence of respiratory allergies), and everyday substances in our homes, like antibacterial products and formaldehyde. Here are some smart ways to minimize the effects of these stealth triggers and shore up your immunity so you can feel healthy year-round.

1

REMEMBER YOUR PROBIOTIC

A daily dose of good bacteria for four to eight weeks can lessen allergic reactions to dust mites and grasses. "The probiotic with the most impact is lactobacillus," says Galland, who recommends 10 billion to 40 billion units daily. Get it from fermented foods, like miso and yogurt, or a supplement. One to try: Culturelle, which contains what the label says it does and is available at drugstores.

2

DITCH ANTIBACTERIAL SOAP

The triclosan in those soaps and sanitizers gets absorbed through the skin and can alter the balance in your microbiome (the microbes and good bacteria in your body), prompting a bigger response to allergens. "Your body relies on exposure to bacteria in order to learn good from bad," says Jessica Savage, an allergist-immunologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital, in Boston. "Anything that kills our bacteria may increase the risk of allergies."

IF IT KILLS YOUR BODY'S BACTERIA, IT COULD INCREASE ALLERGIES.

3

BUY A HELPFUL HOUSEPLANT

A NASA study found that certain plants can rid the air of formaldehyde, a carcinogen found in common household furnishings, like carpeting, that irritates the eyes, nose, and throat and sensitizes immune cells to react to allergens. "Get one or two plants for every 100 square feet in your home," suggests Bill Wolverton, Ph.D., a former NASA scientist who led the research on plants' abilities to filter air toxins. Try a lady palm, a bamboo palm, a rubber plant, a ficus, or a peace lily.

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SWALLOW YOUR ALLERGIES

Allergy tablets and sublingual immunotherapy (SLIT) drops are the newest ways to increase tolerance to allergens and reduce symptoms. These oral treatments are less likely than shots to trigger an adverse reaction and also more convenient, because patients can dose themselves at home, says Sandra Lin, an associate professor of otolaryngology and head and neck surgery at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine who has studied SLIT. The drops are not yet approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, so ask your doctor about single-allergen prescription tablets. Ragwitek is effective against hay fever, Grastek tackles timothy-grass allergies, and Oralair treats a combination of grass pollens.

5

BE CHOOSY AT THE MARKET

It might not be the peaches that are causing your throat to itch; it could be a grass allergy.

Does your mouth or throat feel itchy after eating a raw fruit, nut, or vegetable? It could be cross-reactivity and not a food allergy. Birch, ragweed, and grass pollens have proteins similar to those in some foods, and both can trigger reactions during pollen season. For example, 50 to 75 percent of people with birch allergies get symptoms when they eat stone fruits, kiwis, apples, carrots, celery, almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, and soybeans in the spring. Cook foods or peel them to break down or remove the proteins.

6

TRY BROCCOLI SPROUTS

When eaten raw, these greens have high amounts of sulforaphane, which enables the creation of an antioxidant that helps your body to detox. In one study, people who ate 100 to 200 grams of ground raw broccoli sprouts daily and were then exposed to diesel fumes had significantly less allergic inflammation in their nasal passages after just four days compared with those who hadn't eaten sprouts. You can find broccoli sprouts at health-food stores. Grind them in a food processor and add to salads or sprinkle on soups.

7

KEEP HUMIDITY LOW

UNDER 50 PERCENT HUMIDITY KEEPS ALLERGIES AT BAY.

The sweet spot: between 30 and 50 percent. Dry air helps keep dust mites and molds from growing and stops formaldehyde from breaking down into a gas. (Dip below 30 percent and it will feel too dry.) To check your home's humidity, purchase a meter from any hardware store. If it spikes above 50 percent, use a dehumidifier or run the air conditioner, which naturally dehumidifies.

8

PARK YOUR CAR OUTSIDE

Vehicle engines emit a toxic stew of particulate matter, diesel fumes, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and other easily inhaled pollutants that have been linked to asthma and respiratory illnesses. When you pull your car into the garage, you trap these pollutants inside, where they could leak into your home. A 2009 report by the California Energy Commission found that 65 percent of homes had higher levels of garage-to-home air leakage than what the American Lung Association considers safe.

9

SOAK UP VITAMIN D

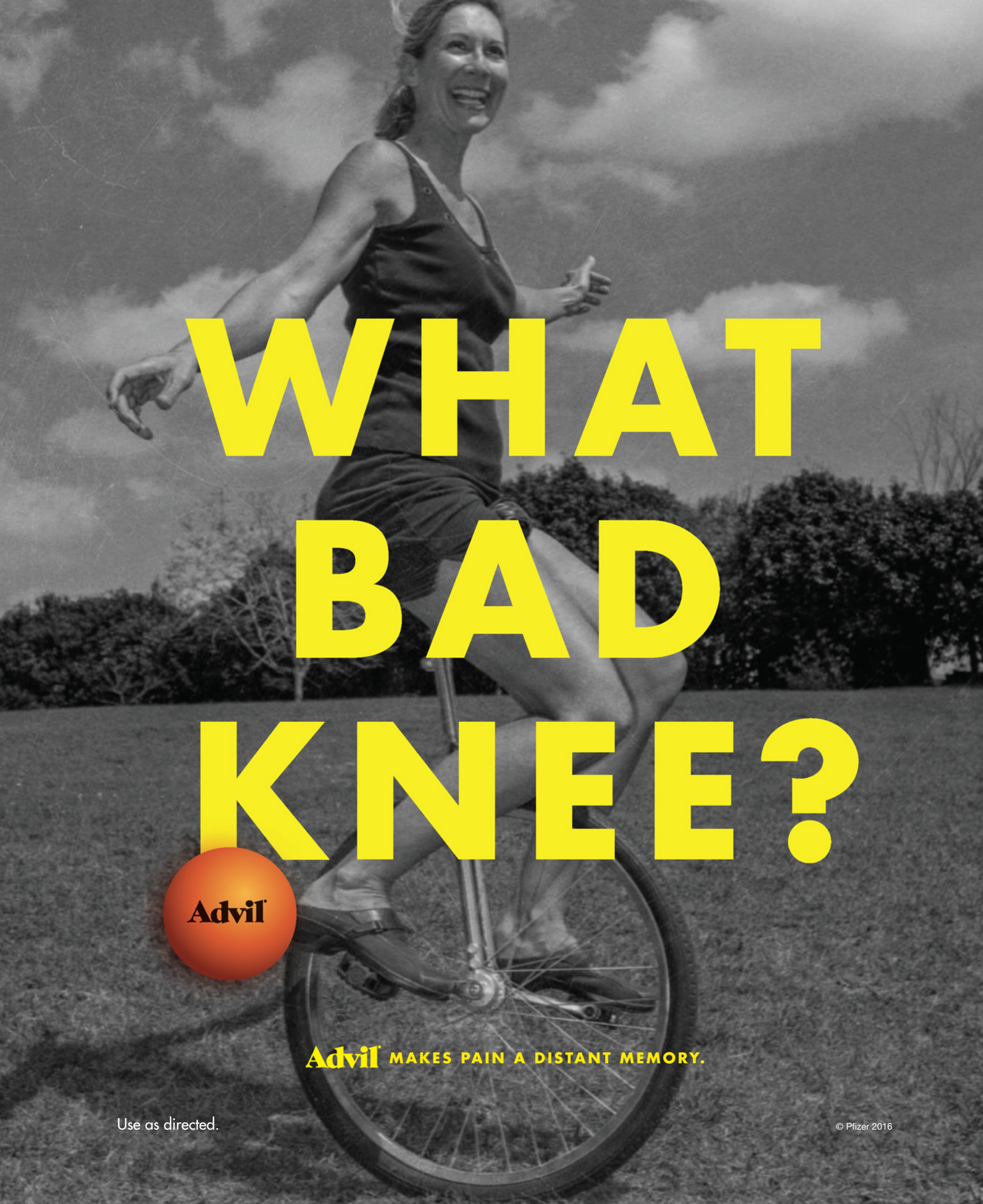
People with D levels lower than 30 nanograms per milliliter have higher rates of nasal allergies, asthma, and eczema, possibly because the vitamin helps suppress inflammation. Supplementing with absorbable D_3 can help alleviate the symptoms of allergic rhinitis, asthma, and dust-mite allergies. In one study, people with nasal allergies who supplemented with 1,000 international units of D_3 daily for 21 days had a significant reduction in symptoms. Have your doctor check your levels before taking supplements.

10

RUN, PEDAL, OR WALK FROM YOUR ALLERGIES

A good workout may lessen symptoms of certain allergies. People with dust-mite allergies who ran for 30 minutes at a moderate intensity had reduced nasal congestion, itchy eyes, and sneezing in a study conducted by Jettanong Klaewsongkram, an allergist-immunologist at Chulalongkorn University, in Thailand. Exercise may trigger the body's anti-inflammatory cytokines, which reduce symptoms. Moderate cardio may also reduce blood flow to nasal tissues, stemming runniness. Exercise during times of the day when pollen is low. "Opt for later afternoon sessions," says Dean C. Mitchell, an immunologist in New York and the author of *The Allergy and Asthma Solution.*

IS THAT ALLERGY FACE?
Erase telltale signs of the season. Go to realsimple.com/allergyface.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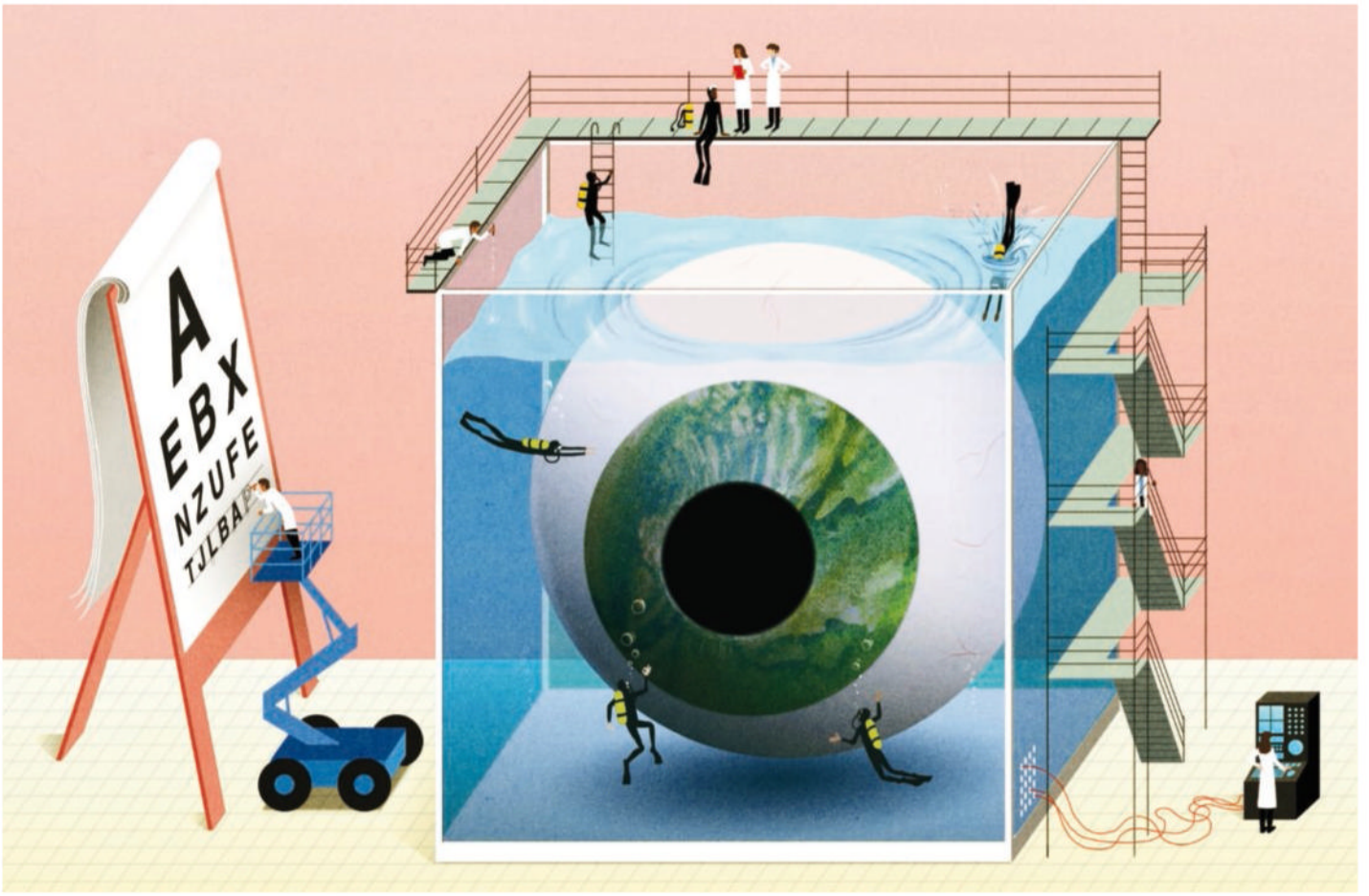

VISION QUEST

Want to keep your eyes healthy for years to come? Everyday habits to help you see a clear future.

Written by Jessica Cassity
Illustrations by Michael Kirkham

HOW OFTEN DO YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR VISION?

If you wear glasses or contact lenses, by now you're probably on autopilot. If your sight has always been perfect, you might fear the pending need for reading glasses. But there are more serious vision issues that keep eye doctors up at night—like the 2,000 job-related eye injuries that happen in this country each day. And the 1 million annual doctor visits for keratitis, an infection linked to improper contact-lens care. Plus, age-related macular degeneration, which affects at least 11 million people and can permanently impair sight. Fortunately, these things are largely preventable.

"There are many everyday things people do that increase their risk of eye disease," says James Tsai, M.D., the president of the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai, in New York City. Here, Tsai and other top doctors offer ways to ward off both short- and long-term vision problems so you can stay sharp.

WHAT YOU MUST DO

WEAR SUNGLASSES OUTDOORS. Believe it or not, even your eyes can get "sunburned." "Just as UV damage accumulates on skin over a lifetime, this also happens to the surface of the eyes," says Rachel Bishop, M.D., the chief of the consult-services section of the National Eye Institute, in Bethesda, Maryland. Over time, UV exposure can put you at higher risk for cataracts (which cloud the vision), thickening of the eye tissue, and skin cancer around the eyes. Lenses with UVA and UVB coatings will reduce those risks. (Polarized lenses reduce glare but don't offer much additional sight protection.)

PLAY IT SAFE WITH YOUR CONTACTS. Did you know you should wash your hands before putting in—and removing—contact lenses? Up to 90 percent of wearers don't correctly care for their lenses, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This often results in keratitis, a treatable inflammation of the cornea. However, "certain infections can seriously damage the eye, sometimes in as little as 24 hours, and can even be irreversible," says Carolyn Carman, O.D., the director of the Center for Sight Enhancement at the University Eye Institute at the University of Houston. Take care: Wash your hands whenever you must touch your eyes, and clean your lens case with hot water weekly. If your eyes are red and irritated, "wear glasses to give your eyes a break," says Jeff Pettey, an assistant clinical professor of ophthalmology at the University of Utah Moran Eye Center, in Salt Lake City.

QUIT SMOKING. Add "prevent vision problems" to that long list of reasons to quit. Smoking heightens your risk of macular degeneration, the leading cause of vision loss in people over age 60. With this disease, which causes a loss in the center of the field of vision, you may, over time, permanently lose your ability to read, recognize people's faces, and see street signs, says Carman. Quitting cigarettes may lower your risk of both macular degeneration and cataracts, according to the CDC.

FLUSH, DON'T BLINK. When soap or another irritant gets in your eyes, use water, not tears, to flush the substance out, especially if it's an alkaline solution (like some toothpastes) or a cleaning product (like bleach). Such irritants may not sting as much as acidic solutions (for example, vinegar) but can be more damaging to the eyes, says Carman. Tears can't flush away irritants as quickly or as thoroughly as water can. Hold your face under a running faucet or shower, or pour water onto your eye from a clean cup repeatedly for 15 minutes. If it still stings, call an eye doctor.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

WEAR PROTECTIVE GOGGLES. (YES, REALLY.) Planning to do yard work or clean the tub? Protective eyewear can keep rocks, branches, chemicals, and more away from your eyes. "This simple precaution reduces the risk of permanently affecting your vision," says Carman. Sturdy, snug wraparound glasses with polycarbonate lenses can protect against splatters and branch pokes, but certified ANSI Z87.1–rated safety goggles are truly effective at resisting high-impact debris.

MAKE AN EYE APPOINTMENT. At around age 40, everyone should get a comprehensive dilated-eye exam by an optometrist (a specialist

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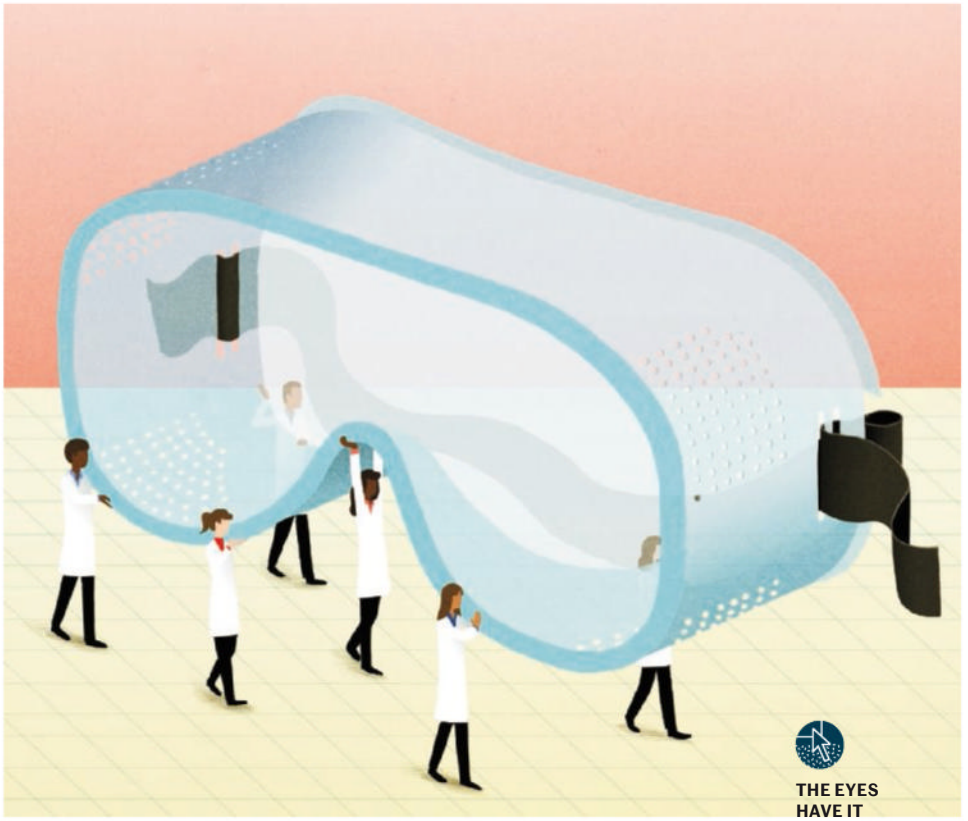

THE EYES HAVE IT
Read how one woman's whole world was changed when she got contact lenses at real simple.com/ contacts.

who examines eyes to determine whether a person needs glasses or medical treatment) or, preferably, an ophthalmologist (a doctor who can diagnose and treat eye problems and diseases). Age-related macular degeneration and glaucoma (a loss of peripheral vision caused by pressure-related nerve damage in the eyes) are among the leading causes of blindness; both can be slowed if caught early, says Natasha Herz, M.D., a clinical spokesperson for the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Most healthy adults should get an exam every two to three years. If you have diabetes or high blood pressure—both risk factors for vision problems—see an ophthalmologist yearly.

LOOK AWAY FROM THE LIGHT. It's not a myth: Staring at ultrabright objects, like the sun or laser pointers, can permanently damage your sight. "Even if you look with sunglasses, you can get damage in the center of your vision," says Tsai. Glancing at the sun at the end of the day isn't as bad—the light rays are reflected—but stay safe by limiting the time you spend staring off into the sunset.

KEEP YOUR GLASSES ON STANDBY. Because contact lenses act like sponges, they can trap infection-causing bacteria on your eye, says Tsai. Up to one in every 500 contact-lens wearers gets a serious infection each year. Consider wearing glasses while in places that may harbor unusual bacteria species, like hot tubs or golf courses.

WHAT YOU COULD DO

RELAX YOUR EYE-RUBBING. Vigorous rubbing can cause more damage than relief. Not only will it stretch the ultra-delicate skin around your eyes but it could also cause a corneal abrasion, elevate eye pressure, and cause visual distortions (such as seeing halos), says Tsai. Instead of rubbing, address the source: If sooty scented candles or your sister's cat makes your eyes itchy, do what you can to avoid those triggers.

GO EASY ON THE YOGA HEADSTANDS. Standing on your head can cause your eye pressure to skyrocket, says Tsai. Depending on your eyes' tolerance for high pressure, this may exacerbate optic-nerve damage, such as glaucoma. That's why headstands and other regular inversions should be avoided by anyone with glaucoma, even in its early stages. In yoga class, skip these poses in favor of something more gentle, such as a legs-up-the-wall pose.

FOLLOW THE 20-20-20 RULE. Does it seem like staring at your computer or phone screen zaps all moisture from your eyes? That's because we don't blink as much during near-task activities, says Bishop. Dry eyes can be painful and can, in severe cases, lead to scars or ulcers on the cornea or loss of vision. To counteract this, keep screens lower than your sight line so your eyes don't open as wide. (This helps to retain more moisture.) And follow the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, take a 20-second break and look 20 feet into the distance. Your eyes can rest, refocus, and rehydrate with some much-needed blinks.

LISTEN TO YOUR EYES. Do you ignore your watery eyes when you chop onions? Next time, take heed. That's your body's way of telling you to change your situation. What may seem like a temporary irritation from things like raw onions, hot peppers, and wood-burning fires can lead to inflammation, says Tsai. Protect yourself by keeping your distance from fire pits. Also try Bishop's kitchen technique: Open the windows for ventilation, and enlist those handy goggles for chopping onions.

BRIGHT IDEAS

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Healdsburg Wine Country Half Marathon

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The Woodinville-to-Redmond Wine & Beer Country Half Marathon is nestled in the beautiful Sammamish River Valley just outside Seattle. The course starts at Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery and finishes on the City Hall Campus in Redmond, where participants and friends can enjoy locally crafted food, wine, and beer at the popular post-race Wine & Music Festival.

HEALDSBURG // CALIFORNIA
OCTOBER 29
This end-of-harvest and Halloween–themed half marathon +5k runs through Sonoma County's Alexander and Dry Creek Valleys. The visually stunning course starts at the Virginia Dare Winery and finishes on the expansive grounds of Trentadue Winery for the post-race Wine & Music Festival. Enter the costume contest, win awards, and enjoy wine-tasting, food, beer, exhibitors, live music, and more!

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Work & Money

THE VIEW FROM HERE

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ELOQUII

Jodi Arnold had an $8 million eponymous clothing brand sold at Barneys New York and other high-end stores. Then a bad economy took it down. She came back stronger, with the plus-size line Eloquii, which had sales of $20 million last year. Arnold, 49, spoke to *Real Simple* about failure, dreams, and transforming lives—including her own—through fashion.

JODI ARNOLD
- Creative/design director of Eloquii, a plus-size clothing line launched by the Limited and now independently owned
- New York City

Tell us about your childhood.
I was born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, and my parents were very strict Southern Baptists. I found myself questioning the norms in the South and liking different ways of dressing. With red hair and freckles, I was already different from everyone around me. I couldn't wait to get to New York and be a fashion designer.

Did you sew as a kid?
I made a lot of my own clothes. One of my early memories is of an elderly woman across the street who passed away and her daughter coming over to say she had all this fabric. I remember going down into her basement and seeing it. To me it was so beautiful, and she let me take it all.

Written by
Jane Porter

You moved to New York the day after you graduated from college, in 1988.
My parents had told me that I couldn't go unless I had a job. I got one as an illustrator for a pattern company.

What came next?
I jumped from job to job every two years or so. I wasn't really doing what I wanted to do.

Until you launched your line, in 1999.
I started it on the side while I worked. At that time, there were little boutiques popping up [downtown] in Nolita and Soho, so I took my clothes around. I didn't think it would be anything, but stores began making orders. Then, 10 months in, I got an order from Barneys for $50,000. I was over the moon. That's when I decided I could really have a company.

How did you fund it?
I remember talking to my dad about taking $5,000 out of my savings account—that's what I needed to get my first collection

produced. He was very negative about it and said, "You need to just stick with a job."

It was very successful, then almost overnight it crumbled.
When Lehman Brothers went bankrupt, in 2008, stores immediately called and canceled orders that had already been produced. The year before had been my best ever. All of a sudden, the orders just stopped, like a faucet that was turned off. It was really scary.

How did you cope?
I don't think I handled myself well. When you're up against a wall, owing people money and not being able to pay rent, it really tests your character. It wasn't so much "Will I have food on my plate?" but I had 30 employees and realized I would have to lay people off. I closed completely in 2011.

You got out of town.
I didn't want to do anything in the U.S., so I found a freelance job in Hong Kong. I wish I could have taken a break, but because of the money situation, I couldn't. Then the Limited offered me the job to do a new plus-size brand. It was like a light went on: *Oh, my gosh, here's where I can make a difference for women who've never had anything really fashionable to wear.* Sixty-five percent of women are above size 14. It gave me purpose in my career again.

"At Eloquii, we get letters saying, 'You changed my life.' I don't think I ever felt that the clothes I was making for size 4 girls were changing lives."

Plus-size fashion is something you'd been thinking about.
There's always been a connection there. I couldn't even wear a size 10 in my own line or shop the contemporary market. I've always been a bit bigger, up to a size 14 at times. When I was young and starting to design for myself, I could find ways to make myself look good, but I couldn't go to a store and do it easily.

Eloquii has had great customer feedback.
We get letters saying, "You changed my life. I don't have to go to an interview looking like a grandmother." I don't think I ever felt that the clothes I was making for size 4 girls were changing lives.

What's something you learned from failure?
I remember feeling so ashamed and embarrassed. But wounds heal faster than you think. Later I realized that people forget your mistakes.

Tell us about your life outside of work.
I've given up a lot for my career. I'm not married; I don't have kids. Maybe that would be different if I hadn't loved this business as much. But for me that was my goal: to come to New York and be recognized as a designer, not to get married or have kids.

You're a dog lover.
I rescued a pit bull about a year ago, and I'm just obsessed with the breed. People say pit-bull owners are the vegans of the dog world. Sometimes I think, *Could I do something charitable or altruistic in the next part of my career, like start a pit-bull rescue?* It's opening my mind to think what the next step could be.

ASK BUCKY

TIME INC.'S* ALL-KNOWING, STRAIGHT-SHOOTING VICE PRESIDENT OF STAFFING, BUCKY KEADY, TACKLES YOUR WORKPLACE CONUNDRUMS.

After an interview, how do I write a thank-you note that's not boring, phony, or robotic?
What I appreciate is when someone expands on the conversation we've had: "I just wanted to mention a little bit more about the point we discussed...." Then add something significant. Once you've taken care of that, you can go for it. Tell them you're right for the job and explain why: "I feel I'm a strong candidate for the position because I know you're interested in someone who has excellent *[fill in the blank]* skills. As you can see from my current work, that's one of the areas where I excel." A handwritten note still makes people rise to the top of the pile. The type of stationery you choose matters. It should be grown-up—nothing too cute, unless that's appropriate to your field. Something clean with a monogram always works. And if you're sending a paper note, send a quick, short thank-you e-mail the day after the interview anyway. That kind of immediacy is expected.

GOT A QUESTION FOR BUCKY? SEND IT TO ASKBUCKY@REALSIMPLE.COM.

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PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

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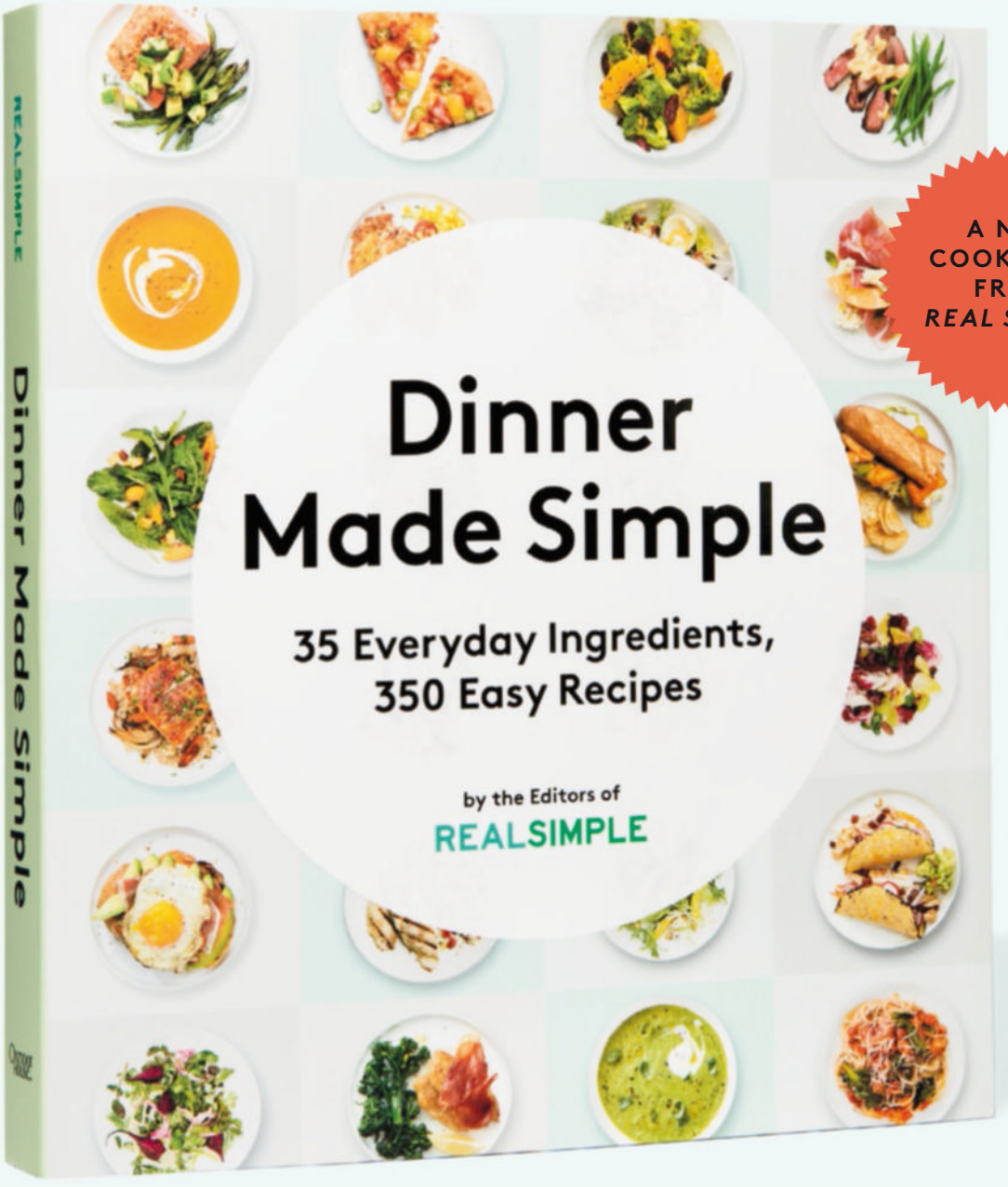

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Need help? Hire a virtual assistant

Written by Amy Palanjian
Illustration by Studio Muti

WHAT *IS* A VIRTUAL ASSISTANT?

Someone (real, not a robot) who works remotely to do the things that a small-business owner (or a freelancer or a would-be entrepreneur) doesn't have time for or doesn't know how to do, says business coach Elaine Quinn of smartsolos.com, a resource for "solopreneurs." That can mean handling social media, booking travel, processing invoices, and more.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

It depends on skills and experience. Some VAs (that's what they're called) can do specialized work, like writing and editing, transcribing, and accounting. Rates range widely, from about $15 to $75 an hour.

HOW DO YOU FIND A VA?

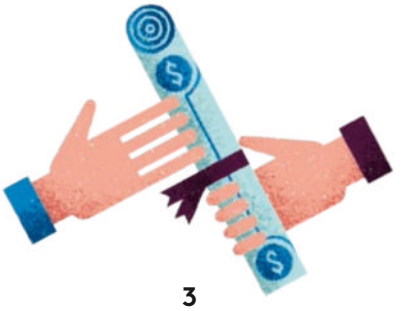
PowerToFly.com and MommyAdmin.com will connect you with VAs and also take care of payments and W-9s. And there's a large, searchable directory at ivaa.org, the site of the International Virtual Assistant Association. Quinn also suggests asking friends: "A personal referral is always best, and VAs are more common than you think." Before searching, make a list of everything you would like to get off your plate, so you know what you're looking for.

HIRING TIPS

Interview a few candidates, and "ask how many current clients they have so you can assess whether they will be responsive to your needs," says Melinda Emerson, the author of *Become Your Own Boss in 12 Months.* Check references. "And talk about work style to see if the two of you are compatible," says Emerson. Does this assistant prefer phone or e-mail? Do you expect a reply to messages immediately, or is once a day OK? Once you've made a hire, be an organized, considerate manager for best results.

How to talk to kids about college costs

According to financial expert Ron Lieber, the author of *The Opposite of Spoiled*, "you can't just unload all the information at once—kids need time to digest and ask questions." Here is Lieber's wise advice on revealing the right details at the right time, in four separate conversations over as many years.



1
THE LAY-YOUR-CARDS-ON-THE-TABLE CONVERSATION

"The summer before ninth grade, talk about what college, both state and private, is going to cost. And then—brace yourself—disclose your finances as they relate to college. Explain what you've saved and what you're willing or able to spend. Tell the truth. Kids should know what it takes to provide the lifestyle they enjoy, so they can make informed choices about school and a career that will allow them to replicate that lifestyle, or exceed it, or live smaller—whatever their goal is. This is also a good time to explain the impact of grades on merit-based financial aid. You don't want to put insane pressure on your kids, but you want them to know early on that good grades can lead to more merit aid and more college options. Be honest about money constraints. If kids are already thinking about expensive colleges, they'll understand that they can work to try to help make that happen. You want to tell them when they still have four summers to earn money."

STRAIGHT TALK
Being honest with kids at the outset about family finances makes the stressful college process smoother in the long run.

FOR MORE FROM THIS EXPERT, GO TO RONLIEBER.COM.

2
THE HERE'S-HOW-THE-SYSTEM-WORKS CONVERSATION

"After freshman year, explain that some colleges give aid based on need and some offer aid based on merit. Be wary of declaring all pricey schools off-limits, because it's possible that a kid with really good grades could get a big merit-aid package at a second- or third-tier school. Also, you might get more need-based aid than you expect."

3
THE BORROWING CONVERSATION

"The summer before junior year, you'll have a better sense of where you are financially. Share any updates. Now is the time to talk about student loans. The script goes something like this: 'We want you to know that one way families pay for school is by borrowing. We may borrow some, and the school may ask *you* to borrow as well. We don't know how much it will be, and we'll work together to figure that out. Some of the debt will be yours, and you'll be responsible for tracking it and paying it back on time.' Hopefully you've given your kids some exposure to your mortgage or other debts, so they know that a reasonable amount of debt doesn't have to feel like an enormous burden."

DOING THE MATH
The site CollegeAbacus.org can help predict how much you'll be asked to pay after grants and scholarships (need- or merit-based).

4
THE LET'S-DO-THIS CONVERSATION

"The summer before senior year is the time to make actual decisions about where to apply. Divide the schools you're talking about into those you can afford, the 50-50s, and the long shots. Update if any of your numbers—income, savings—have changed. Fill out the financial-aid forms. Some people think they won't qualify, so they don't bother. I say, 'Take a shot.' You can't tell which school will need a goalie or a flute player and will therefore offer more financial aid to get one."

Written by Nicole Sforza
Illustrations by Studio Muti

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FROM THE BOOK *STOP HERE, THIS IS THE PLACE: A YEAR IN MOTHERLAND*, BY SUSAN CONLEY AND WINKY LEWIS (DOWN EAST BOOKS, 2016)

Fashion Director Victoria Sanchez-Lincoln Written by Rebecca Daly
Photographs by Roland Bello Set Design by Jeffrey W. Miller Soft Styling by Mariana Vera

FOR DETAILS ON THESE TWO SUITS, TURN TO PAGE 146.

Chic and sleek, modest and memorable: **Behold the power of a one-piece.**

RETRO

1

SPERRY
Scalloped edging and a sweet daisy print add to this suit's girlish appeal.
TO BUY: $106 (use the code REALSIMPLE for 20 percent off sitewide), houseofswim.com.

2

AERIE
Molded cups give support and guarantee that this maillot will stay up, even if you remove the accompanying halter strap.
TO BUY: $50, aerie.com.

3

LAUNDRY BY SHELLI SEGAL
Create a curvaceous effect on a straight figure with strategically placed stripes that visually contour your torso.
TO BUY: $128, lordandtaylor.com.

4

GAP
This classic cut looks just as good going as coming—adjustable straps tie into a cute bow over an open back.
TO BUY: $60, gap.com.

5

TORY BURCH
It's full of design details (and we don't mean just the pretty pattern): The inside edges of this suit are trimmed in silicone, so they don't budge.
TO BUY: $250, toryburch.com.

MOSAIC

1970s

SPORTY

6

CREMIEUX
High-end touches, like (waterproof) pom-poms and a (forgiving) ruched silhouette, make this one-piece a steal at only $100.
TO BUY: $100, dillards.com.

7

NANETTE LEPORE
Feeling daring? Try out one of this season's other big swim trends—a plunging neckline.
TO BUY: $160, bloomingdales.com.

8

TOMMY HILFIGER
It may be surf-inspired, but this suit's waist-whittling color blocking looks just as good lounging poolside.
TO BUY: $96, macys.com.

9

ZIGILANE FROM BIKINI.COM
The neoprene-like material works like Spanx to slim and contour your midsection.
TO BUY: $210, bikini.com.

BLACK

WANT EVEN MORE? Head to real simple.com/ swim2016 for bikinis, tankinis, and, yes, great one-pieces.

10

MAGICSUIT
From the offshoot of the Miraclesuit brand, this strapless, ruffled number delivers the same beloved support and control.
TO BUY: $158, bloomingdales.com.

11

LANDS' END
Particularly flattering for fuller busts, the high-cut neckline redirects attention to toned arms and shoulders.
TO BUY: $159, landsend.com.

12

FLAGPOLE SWIM
Peekaboo! This chic key-hole cut gives you a taste of a two-piece without any of the agitation.
TO BUY: $385, flagpole swim.com.

13

KATE SPADE NEW YORK
Shown on page 140: Graphic, horizontal stripes are broken up by a long vertical line for an overall elongating effect.
TO BUY: $142, couture. zappos.com.

14

MARA HOFFMAN
Shown on page 141: Birds of a feather will flock to this showstopping suit's pretty print. A bonus: Underwire cups provide extra support.
TO BUY: $236, amazon. com/fashion.

COLOR-BLOCK

IT'S NO SMALL THING

WE'RE TALKING 900 SQUARE FEET.

…to live large in a tiny home. But professional organizer Beth Zeigler Penn has pulled it off in a big way. Here are 17 of her best tips to make your own rooms feel roomier.

01

Metals are magical

Metal objects—in this case, shelving—bounce light around a room, making it airier. For extra reflectiveness in this family/guest room, Beth replaced the top and bottom shelves with mirrored glass.

02

Get a tall coffee table

Look for one that's 28 inches or so (the average table is more like 16) to draw the eye upward and make the space feel more spacious. An open base and a glass top help the cause, too.

Written by
Betsy Goldberg

Photographs by
Thayer Allyson Gowdy

03

Got a wall? There's your office

You don't need a spare room to set up an organized work space. Beth carved out hers along one side of the family/guest room, lining the wall with a slim DIY desk: an 11-inch-deep sustainable-pine plank (from timelinewood.com) mounted with brackets. Whiteboard paint turns the wall into a message board. Choose chic, non-officey chairs that can double as extra seating when friends come over. (Check out chairish.com or wayfair.com.)

04

Try a simple strip of cork

It's sold at Staples, and it's all you need to pin up lists and notes. (Adhere it to the wall with 3M Command Velcro strips.)

05

Exploit mountable storage

Magazine racks are an alternative to floor-hogging file cabinets. Add a cup-holder below to put pens in easy reach. For a big array of wall-mountable storage options, go to ikea.com or container store.com.

MEET THE SMALL-SPACE STRATEGIST

Beth Zeigler Penn is the owner of the organizing firm Bneato Bar and the genius behind this tricked-out Los Angeles home. She lives with her television writer/producer husband, Adam Penn; their dog, Marty; and their cat, Garbo.

PROP STYLING BY DANE HOLWEGER; GROOMING BY DIANE DA SILVA USING LAURA MERCIER AT ATELIER MANAGEMENT

06

DON'T CROWD YOUR SURFACES!

Ignore the instinct to fill every inch of space in a tight spot—that only makes the area look cramped. Breathing room between objects on shelves sends a message that you have space *(ahhh)* to spare.

07

Stick with neutrals and naturals

A calming color scheme on the walls and in the furniture eliminates visual noise and ups the luxe factor in a small, standard space. Here, the walls are painted a creamy white (Swiss Coffee by Dunn-Edwards Paints).

09

If you're a plant person, exercise restraint

Greenery naturally opens up a room with its outdoorsy vibe, but a plant that's too bushy can overwhelm a space. Try a sleek, spiky one (like this dracaena) in a glossy, clean-lined container, and sprinkle in some smaller succulents if you like.

08

You can fake a foyer

It's easy to turn a bare spot by the front door into an inviting entryway. Anchor it with a tall, open bookcase to put objects on display, and corral everyday essentials (sunglasses, keys) in a pretty container. To keep the floor clutter-free, turn a woven basket into a shoe drop and park your go-to bag on a weighty hook hung at eye level.

10

You can fake a dining room, too

Instead of the standard, skimpy bistro set, go glam—and substantial—when it comes to furniture and accents. Formal touches (cushy banquette, oversize artwork) make a small space feel more special and established. Beth balanced the bulky pieces with lighter ones, like a legroom-friendly pedestal table and see-through acrylic chairs. Find more smart picks for small dining spaces at cb2.com and worldmarket.com.

11

Remember the classic curtain-rod trick

When you hang curtains as close to the ceiling as possible, it brings the focus up high, making the room appear loftier. If this move calls for longer curtains, you can sew two of the same fabric panels together.

12

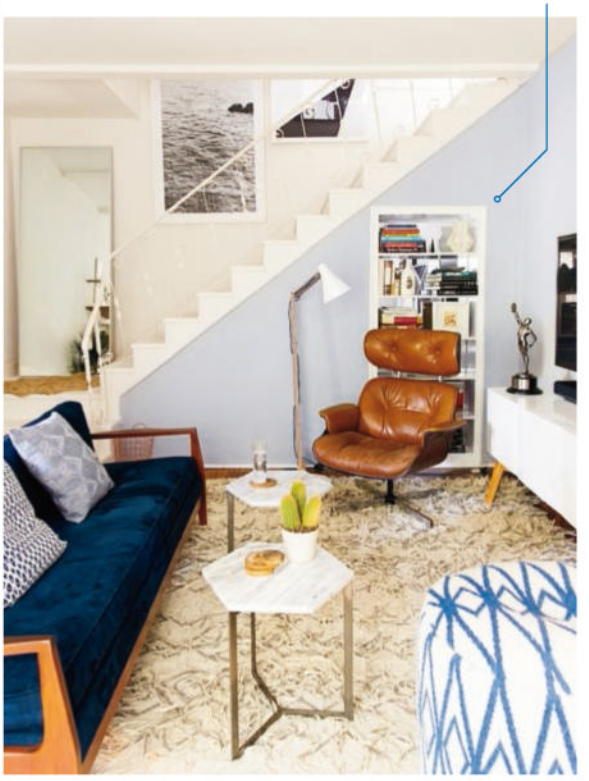
Organic shapes are less confining

A floor covering with a curvy outline, like this hide rug, gives more visual flow between areas in a room. Find similar rugs at overstock.com or rugsusa.com. (Search for "hide rug.")

13

REPURPOSE A CLOSET

An out-of-the-way, underused shallow closet becomes an eye-catching curio when you ditch the doors and line the back of each shelf with light-reflecting mirrored glass (cut to fit and just popped in—not even glued). Beth stored books and extra cords (in lacquer boxes) in hers and painted the surrounding wall gray to help the spot pop.



14

Make sure furniture is flexible

In a compact living space, a pair of versatile end tables works better than one long coffee table. When you have guests over, you can move the tables around to create conversation areas. Short on floor space for the party? Tuck the tables into a corner.

15

Max out a micro bedroom

Despite what your instinct may tell you, the best thing to do in a tiny bedroom is fill it with large-scale furniture, because a few statement pieces look a lot less cluttered than a bunch of small ones. A gallery wall brings in a big dose of beauty. Challenged by closet constraints, Beth needed a catchall for out-of-season stuff, so she re-created a floating credenza that she had seen on the blog The Brick House: Ikea kitchen cabinets wrapped with wood planks (glued and screwed in) and mounted at waist level.

16

Don't be shy with a gallery wall

A bold array of art helps a small space feel high-end. Designer Talia Laconi of Homepolish, a Web-based decorating service, gave this one a sophisticated look by mixing flat, framed pieces with 3-D art. A wiry sculpture lets light pass through; the mirror below plays up the flowers in front. An Ikea swing-arm lamp illuminates the room without swallowing up surface space.

17

ALWAYS INCLUDE AN ACCENT CHAIR

No room for it? Just angle it! Remember: Every corner is a commodity. Happy seating.

When I see her do a little bobble, I grasp at the air, trying to help her stay on the beam."

NATALIE HAWKINS,
MOM OF GOLD-MEDAL GYMNAST GABBY DOUGLAS

Written by
Molly Knight

Photographs by
Robert Maxwell

GABBY DOUGLAS, MOM NATALIE HAWKINS

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE AN OLYMPIAN? GRIT, DETERMINATION, STRENGTH, AND BALANCE. TALKING WITH FOUR SUPERSTAR ATHLETES AND THEIR MOMS, *REAL SIMPLE* LEARNS THAT SOME QUALITIES JUST RUN IN THE FAMILY.

AMY COZAD, MOM DONNA COZAD

ALYSIA MONTAÑO, MOM YVONNE JOHNSON

TATYANA McFADDEN, MOMS DEBORAH McFADDEN AND BRIDGET O'SHAUGHNESSEY

GABBY DOUGLAS

SPORT **GYMNASTICS**
MOM **NATALIE HAWKINS**

At the 2012 London Olympics, Gabby Douglas, then 16, became the first African-American woman in history to win gold for the individual all-around in gymnastics. Two years earlier, at 14, Gabby had moved from her family home in Virginia to West Des Moines, Iowa, to train with renowned coach Liang Chow after having lobbied her mom, Natalie, for months to allow her to go. Natalie stayed back in Virginia with Gabby's three siblings. In Iowa, Gabby became so intensely homesick that, months before the 2012 Olympics, she nearly quit. Her mom convinced her to follow through, offering a deal that if Gabby still wanted to quit at the end of the season, she could. Gabby stayed, went to the Olympics, and won two gold medals. This year, at age 20, she approaches the Games already a bona fide superstar.

REAL SIMPLE: Natalie, what's it like watching your daughter in competition?
NATALIE HAWKINS: It's an adrenaline rush—exhausting, exhilarating, nerve-racking. When I see her do a little bobble sometimes, I grasp at the air, trying to help her stay on the beam.
GABBY DOUGLAS: I get the same feeling when I'm watching my teammates. You know how much time and sacrifice they put into it, and you just want them to do well, but you're totally helpless.
RS: What do you think you got from your mom, Gabby?
G.D.: I probably got my athleticism from her and my flexibility.
N.H.: And your good looks, too.
G.D.: *[laughs]* Definitely.
RS: Do you like to soar through the air like your daughter, Natalie?
N.H.: The kids are always trying to get me on a roller coaster in the summertime. But watching her is my roller coaster.
G.D.: I got my mom on the balance beam in the gym once. It took, like, 20 minutes to convince her. Wait—it was a low beam. Does that even count?
N.H.: It counts. I'm not getting on that high beam. Why would I want to go four feet up in the air on a bar that's four inches wide?
RS: You two seem to really enjoy each other.
G.D.: I try to cherish every day I get to spend with my mom.
N.H.: We went without being together for so long [two years, while Gabby trained in Iowa; she now trains in Ohio, still far from home]. My friends are always saying, "How come your kids [ages 27, 22, 21, and 20] always want to hang out with you?" It feels really good to hear that.

AMY COZAD

SPORT **DIVING**
MOM **DONNA COZAD**

The United States will send more than 500 athletes to the Olympics this summer. Only a couple are household names. Most are people who, gifted in a sport, live regular lives into which they fit intense training. Amy Cozad, 25, is the reigning national champion in women's 10-meter platform diving. She is also a recent college graduate with a degree in mathematics. Amy placed sixth in the world last year, and after she officially qualifies, she will head to Rio de Janeiro for her first Olympics. Her mom, Donna, who manages a restaurant in their Indiana hometown, helped give Amy the chance to go for the gold.

REAL SIMPLE: What do you think got Amy to where she is as a diver?
DONNA COZAD: She works so hard and is so dedicated. She missed out on a lot in high school. She wasn't going to parties like the other kids.
AMY COZAD: I got that [work ethic] from my mom. My parents split when I was really young. My mom sacrificed a lot and worked so hard to take care of us. [Sister Jenny is 26; brother Cayman is a freshman in high school.] She's easily the hardest-working woman I know. I draw on her independence and her strength.
RS: Donna, how do you feel when you watch Amy at a meet?
D.C.: My heart sinks immediately whenever she walks to the end of that board. I am terribly afraid of heights. I've been up on there only once, and I got dizzy and sweaty. But then Amy is just so calm and nails it. I've never gotten used to how talented she is.
RS: Donna, your kids have worked for you at the restaurant, right?
D.C.: Yes, all three at some point. Amy worked there in the fall of 2014.
A.C.: I had moved to Tallahassee, Florida, with my boyfriend [now fiancé], Alex, to take a job as assistant [diving] coach at Florida State University. Then the head coach decided to take a job elsewhere. Ten months after moving to Florida, I was facing the decision of whether to find another job or become a professional diver. My mom let Alex and me move into her house and gave me the chance to work at the restaurant to bring in some income, so I could dive. If it weren't for her, I don't think I would have been able to get back to diving.
D.C.: That's actually where we'll be on Mother's Day—at the restaurant. It's our busiest day of the year, so I always have to work. Hopefully, the kids will be up there with me, taking a shift.

OPENING PAGE: HAIR AND MAKEUP BY AMBER PRESTON. OPPOSITE: HAIR BY COURTNEY MAERTIN; MAKEUP BY KATE SHAW

My heart sinks immediately whenever she walks to the end of that board. But then Amy is just so calm and nails it. I've never gotten used to how talented she is."

DONNA COZAD,
MOM OF DIVER
AMY COZAD

When Tatyana came into our lives, the dream was to keep her alive—never to make her an Olympic athlete."

DEBORAH McFADDEN (ON RIGHT), MOM OF PARALYMPIAN GOLD MEDALIST TATYANA McFADDEN

TATYANA McFADDEN

SPORT **PARALYMPIC TRACK AND FIELD**
MOMS **DEBORAH McFADDEN *(OPPOSITE PAGE, ON RIGHT)* AND BRIDGET O'SHAUGHNESSEY *(ON LEFT)***

Tatyana McFadden was born in Leningrad, Russia, in 1989, with a hole in her spine. Paralyzed from the waist down, she spent her first six years in an orphanage and taught herself to walk on her hands. Two decades later, she is the only athlete in the world—male, female, able, or disabled—to win the grand slam of marathons, finishing first in Boston, London, Chicago, and New York in the same year, 2012, as well as in 2013 and 2014. Already the owner of 11 Paralympic medals, she will this summer attempt to become the first Paralympic athlete to medal in all seven track events in one meet. Her moms, Deborah and Bridget, have been her support system from the start, in every possible way. Deborah is a former U.S. Commissioner of Disabilities and was a key player in the writing and passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act, in 1990. Later, when Tatyana was in high school and banned from competing in her wheelchair against able-bodied runners, Tatyana and Deborah filed a suit against their Maryland county and won. That spurred the passage of a state law requiring schools to allow students with disabilities to compete in interscholastic sports.

REAL SIMPLE: Tell us about how you found each other.

DEBORAH McFADDEN: In 1994 I was over [in Leningrad, at an orphanage] on a government trip, with no intention of adoption. Tatyana was one of many cute, beautiful children, but she was the only disabled child. She sort of scooted over to me. She wanted to see my camera. And I just kept her with me that whole day. I don't really know what it was, but the next day, I just had to go see her. I wasn't a mother yet, and I'd never had that feeling before.

TATYANA McFADDEN: I was six years old. People were always coming in and out, wanting to adopt. I always hoped I would be the one they picked. I don't really know why, but immediately I knew she would be my mom. I just remember running around and telling everyone, and they were like, "OK! Yeah, great!" For me, it was just an instantaneous connection.

D.M.: Bridget and I have been together for 32 years, and it was about 11 years at that point. I came home and showed her pictures of Tatyana.

BRIDGET O'SHAUGHNESSEY: I fell in love with her. The first time I met her, she was so adventurous and cute. She followed me all over the place, and she was so excited with everything we gave her. I remember she fell asleep with a toothbrush in her hand.

D.M.: There is this Russian phrase *Ya, sama,* which basically means "I can do it myself." And no matter what we exposed Tatyana to, she said, *"Ya, sama."* We were told she wasn't going to have a long life because she was so weak and had so many physical challenges. So we thought we should get her involved in activities that would make her stronger right away. When she came into our lives, the dream was to keep her alive—never to make her an Olympic athlete.

B.O.: Whatever she wanted to do, we decided we would figure out how it could be possible. She had this amazing, independent personality. So we threw her into swimming, wheelchair basketball, archery, sled hockey—anything to make her stronger.

T.M.: I liked sports, but it wasn't until I was 10 or 12, when I saw myself improving and getting faster, that I realized maybe I could be good at them.

RS: You've written a children's book.

T.M.: Yes, it's called *Ya Sama.* It's about overcoming obstacles—and how important it is for all kids to have dreams.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY MICHAEL GOYETTE FOR CELESTINE AGENCY USING MAC COSMETICS

ALYSIA MONTAÑO

SPORT **TRACK**
MOM **YVONNE JOHNSON**
DAUGHTER **LINNÉA MONTAÑO**

Alysia Montaño was a favorite in the 800-meter race during the 2012 London games. Then age 26, she had been competing against some of the world's top runners for nearly half her life. But in the race Alysia came in fifth. She suspected something was up. Three years later, the World Anti-Doping Agency released a report revealing that many athletes had tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs leading up to the London games—and that the test results had probably been washed away with bribes. Two of the suspected athletes placed in front of Alysia in her event, robbing her of a bronze medal and potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars in endorsement deals. After the London heartbreak, Montaño considered quitting. Instead, she gave birth to a daughter, famously (and remarkably) competing in the 2014 USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships while eight months pregnant. The new mom says her own mom has made it possible for her to train for Rio, where she hopes to win her first Olympic medal.

REAL SIMPLE: What are your thoughts looking back on London?

YVONNE JOHNSON: I am in awe of Alysia's integrity. I can remember the year before, she had told me she thought something was happening that was not right.

ALYSIA MONTAÑO: Yeah, it was 2011. I told you and Louis [Alysia's husband] that they were doping. I was mad. I felt cheated. I had spent my entire life working to improve by increments of seconds, and all of a sudden these women who were not really among the most elite in the sport come out of nowhere and put up these times that are the best in the world. It was a struggle for me. I had to fight to stay in the sport.

Y.J.: It was devastating, because what can you do? If you tell people, it looks like you're just coming up with excuses. I am so proud of you for still giving it your all. She suspected they were cheating, and she had her dream taken away, and she still shook hands with them. The integrity you showed blew me away. That's a gift you give to Linnéa.

A.M.: *Aww,* thanks, Mama. Honestly, there's no way I could have had a baby and then come back so fast if it wasn't for my mom. After Linnéa was born, my husband and I moved down to my hometown [Santa Clarita, California] and got a place near her. She would come over and help me figure out how to balance being a mom and training for the Olympics. I'd go out and train in the afternoons with my husband. He'd be watching my form while my mom was home watching the baby. We stayed near her for a full year. She is the reason I will be in Rio.

Y.J.: I really appreciated that time you gave me. That year I had with my granddaughter was a gift.

A.M.: I knew I wanted my mom to be instrumental in raising Linnéa. When I was growing up, my aunts and uncles and grandma were always there making me feel like I could accomplish what I set out to do.

RS: What's one thing you've learned from your mother?

A.M.: That when you're a mom, it doesn't end when your child becomes an adult. It's forever your duty.

Y.J.: Being her mom has been fun, I have to say—even though I still get nervous when she races. I used to go so nuts, I'd race my feet along with her from my seat in the stands. Now I can compose myself. I run the track with her in my mind. ■

THE RIO OLYMPICS BEGIN ON AUGUST 5. TO LEARN MORE, VISIT TEAMUSA.ORG.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY AMY LAWSON FOR ARTIST UNTIED AGENCY USING MAKE UP FOR EVER

My mom would come over and help me figure out how to balance being a mom to a newborn and training for the Olympics. We lived near her for a full year. She is the reason I will be in Rio."

ALYSIA MONTAÑO, WITH HER MOM, YVONNE JOHNSON, AND HER DAUGHTER, LINNÉA

THEY TAKE THE CAKE
MAKE YOUR OWN MAD TEA PARTY (OR MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH) EVEN SWEETER WITH THESE NO-FROST, NO-FUSS DESSERTS.
RHUBARB UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

Recipes by Sarah Copeland Photographs by Marcus Nilsson
Food Styling by Maggie Ruggiero Set Design by Jeffrey W. Miller

Apricot Clafouti
CHOCOLATE MUD CAKE

STRAWBERRY ALMOND CORNMEAL CAKE
Lemon Poppy Bundt Cake
BROWN-SUGAR BANANA CAKE

RHUBARB UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR, 45 MINUTES (INCLUDES COOLING)**
SERVES **9 TO 12**

- 10 oz. (1¼ cups) unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus more for the pan
- 1 lb. rhubarb, cut into 4-inch pieces
- 1½ cups granulated sugar, divided
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar, divided
- 2 cups cake flour or all-purpose flour
- 1¼ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. fine salt
- 1 tsp. grated lemon zest (from 1 lemon)
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- ⅓ cup full-fat plain yogurt
- Vanilla or strawberry ice cream, for serving

PREHEAT the oven to 325°F. Butter and line an 8-inch square pan with parchment. Butter the parchment.

TOSS the rhubarb, ½ cup of the granulated sugar, and ¼ cup of the brown sugar together in a bowl. Layer the rhubarb across the bottom of the pan in a grid pattern, adding any remaining sugar mixture to the pan.

WHISK together the flour, baking powder, and salt. In a separate bowl, beat the butter, remaining sugars, and lemon zest with an electric mixer until light and fluffy, 4 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Add the vanilla and eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition.

STIR in the yogurt on low speed. (The mixture may look curdled.) Gradually add the flour mixture and stir to combine.

SPOON the batter over the rhubarb and spread evenly. (The pan will be almost full.)

BAKE until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 1 hour, 15 minutes. Cool on a wire rack for 15 minutes, then unmold onto a platter. (Discard the parchment paper.) Cut the cake into squares and serve warm with ice cream.

DRINK ME

THE TEA PAIRINGS FOR EACH CAKE ARE FROM HEIDI JOHANNSEN STEWART, THE OWNER OF BELLOCQ TEA ATELIER, IN NEW YORK CITY.

RHUBARB UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE: LEMONGRASS OR LEMON VERBENA TEA

APRICOT CLAFOUTI

ACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **55 MINUTES**
SERVES **6 TO 8**

- Unsalted butter, for the pan
- ⅓ cup granulated sugar, plus more for the pan
- ¾ lb. apricots (about 5), pitted and halved
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- ¾ cup half-and-half
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- Powdered sugar and whipped cream, for serving

PREHEAT the oven to 375°F.

COAT a shallow 8-inch ovenproof round dish with butter and sprinkle lightly with sugar.

PLACE the apricots in the dish in a single layer.

WHISK together the flour, sugar, vanilla, half-and-half, and eggs in a bowl until smooth. Pour over the apricots and bake for 40 to 45 minutes, until puffed and golden. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve with whipped cream.

CHOCOLATE MUD CAKE

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **50 MINUTES**
SERVES **6 TO 8**

- 3.5 oz. (7 Tbsp.) unsalted butter, cubed, plus more for the pan
- 6 Tbsp. all-purpose flour, plus more for the pan
- 4 oz. bittersweet chocolate
- ¼ tsp. fine salt
- 3 large eggs, separated
- ⅔ cup granulated sugar, divided
- Whipped cream, for serving

PREHEAT the oven to 350°F. Butter and line an 8-inch round cake pan or springform pan with parchment. Butter the parchment and dust lightly with flour.

MELT the butter and chocolate in the microwave in 1-minute increments, on half power, stirring every minute, until shiny and smooth. Stir in the salt and set aside.

WHISK together the egg yolks and 4 tablespoons of the sugar until thick and creamy.

MIX the egg whites in a separate, clean bowl with an electric mixer on high until foamy. Gradually add the remaining sugar, a tablespoon at a time, whipping continuously until the whites are thick and glossy and hold a soft peak, 3 to 5 minutes.

FOLD the egg yolk mixture into the chocolate. Add ⅓ of the chocolate mixture to the egg whites and fold in gently, until marbled. Taking care to keep the batter light and airy, fold in the flour in 2 parts, alternating with the remaining chocolate, until evenly combined.

SPOON the batter into the pan and bake until crispy on top and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out almost clean, 25 to 30 minutes. Cut into wedges and serve slightly warm with whipped cream.

OPENING SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: WHITE-AND-GOLD TEA SET BY L'OBJET. PINK-AND-GOLD TEAPOT BY BERGDORF GOODMAN HOME. BLACK-AND-WHITE STRIPED TEA SET BY RICHARD GINORI. GOLD-TRIMMED PLATTER BY ROSENTHAL. CAKE PLATE WITH GOLD LEAVES BY L'OBJET. GOLD SAUCER WITH WHITE TEACUP AND SUGAR BOWL BY ROSENTHAL. VILLARI GOLD CREAMER AND TEAPOT WITH FLOWER BY ABC HOME. TURQUOISE-AND-GOLD TEA SET, PINK-AND-BLACK STRIPED TEA SET, AND YELLOW-AND-RED TEAPOT BY RICHARD GINORI. **PREVIOUS SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** STRIPED TEA SET BY RICHARD GINORI. GOLD-RIMMED PLATTER BY ROSENTHAL. YELLOW-AND-RED TEAPOT BY RICHARD GINORI. GOLD-SILVER-AND–ROSE GOLD TEA SET BY L'OBJET. PINK TEAPOT AND YELLOW CUP WITH SAUCER BY RICHARD GINORI.

STRAWBERRY ALMOND CORNMEAL CAKE

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR, 40 MINUTES (INCLUDES COOLING)**
SERVES **6 TO 8**

- 5 oz. (10 Tbsp.) unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus more for the pan
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour, plus more for the pan
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. fine salt
- 1 cup plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar, divided
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 cup fine cornmeal or instant polenta
- 2 cups almond flour (found in the baking aisle)
- 8 medium strawberries, hulled

PREHEAT the oven to 350°F. Butter and line a 9-inch loaf pan with parchment. Butter the parchment and dust lightly with flour.

WHISK together the flour, baking powder, and salt in a small bowl. In a separate bowl, beat the butter, 1 cup of the sugar, and the vanilla with an electric mixer on high, scraping down the sides of the bowl, until light and fluffy, 2 minutes. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, mixing well between additions, until fluffy. Fold the flour mixture into the batter. Fold in the cornmeal and almond flour, scraping the bottom of the bowl, until combined.

SPOON the batter into the prepared pan; smooth with a spatula. Press the strawberries partway into the batter, leaving space between them. Sprinkle the top with the remaining sugar. Bake until the edges are browned and a cake tester inserted in the center (avoiding the berries) comes out with a few moist crumbs attached, 1 hour, 10 minutes. Transfer the cake to a wire rack to cool, 10 minutes, before turning the cake out of the pan. Cool completely. Cut into slices and serve.

DRINK ME

APRICOT CLAFOUTI: CEYLON TEA

CHOCOLATE MUD CAKE: MASALA CHAI TEA

BROWN-SUGAR BANANA CAKE: ROOIBOS TEA

BROWN-SUGAR BANANA CAKE

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR**
SERVES **6 TO 8**

- 5 oz. (10 Tbsp.) unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus more for the pan
- 1¾ cups dark brown sugar, divided
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 2 eggs, at room temperature
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. fine salt
- ½ cup sour cream
- 4 very ripe large bananas, halved lengthwise
- Vanilla ice cream, for serving

PREHEAT the oven to 375°F. Butter and line a 9-by-13-inch pan with parchment. Butter the parchment.

BEAT the butter and 1½ cups of the brown sugar with an electric mixer on medium-high until light and fluffy, 5 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and add the vanilla and eggs, one at a time. Beat to combine.

WHISK together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Add to the batter, alternating with the sour cream, beginning and ending with the flour mixture. Beat until just combined.

SPOON the batter into the prepared pan and smooth with a spatula. Lay the bananas, cut-side up, across the batter (they will sink in) and sprinkle with the remaining brown sugar. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cake (avoiding the bananas) comes out clean, 35 to 45 minutes. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream.

LEMON POPPY BUNDT CAKE

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR, 15 MINUTES (INCLUDES COOLING)**
SERVES **6 TO 8**

DRINK ME

STRAWBERRY ALMOND CORNMEAL CAKE: LIGHT OOLONG OR DARJEELING TEA

LEMON POPPY BUNDT CAKE: EARL GREY TEA

CAKE

- 5 oz. (10 Tbsp.) unsalted butter, cubed, at room temperature, plus more for the pan
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour, plus more for the pan
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 Tbsp. poppy seeds
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- ¾ tsp. fine salt
- ½ cup full-fat plain yogurt
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 4 tsp. grated lemon zest (from 3 lemons)

SYRUP

- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup lemon juice (from 2 lemons)

PREHEAT the oven to 350°F. Butter and flour a 12-cup Bundt pan, tapping out the excess flour. In a food processor, pulse together the flour, sugar, poppy seeds, baking powder, and salt. Add the butter and pulse to form pebble-size pieces.

WHISK together the yogurt, eggs, and lemon zest. Add to the flour mixture and pulse until just combined, 30 seconds. Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and bake until the cake is light golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes.

MEANWHILE, make the syrup. Combine the sugar and 3 tablespoons water in a small pan. Cook over low heat until the sugar has dissolved and is just warm (do not boil). Stir in the lemon juice.

COOL the cake in the pan on a rack, 20 minutes, then turn out onto a serving platter; cool until just warm to the touch. Prick all over with a toothpick. Slowly drizzle the syrup over the cake. Cut into slices and serve.

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Healthy Pick (171, 172, 174, 176, 184)
Freezable (166, 167, 178)
Make Ahead (166, 167, 172, 174, 178, 184, 190)
Big Batch (166, 167, 174, 184)
One Pot (174, 184)
Whole-Grain (176, 190)
Vegetarian (166, 167, 172, 184, 190)
Gluten-Free (171, 176, 184, 190)

USE A SERRATED KNIFE TO SLICE THESE GUYS.

BABY LOVE
Baby bok choy is more tender than regular bok choy and softens quickly in dishes like Sesame Chicken Noodle Bowl (page 174).

ALPHA OMEGA
WILD ALASKAN SALMON IS THE CLEANEST (LOW-MERCURY) VARIETY OF SALMON. BEFORE SEARING A FILLET, PAT VERY DRY WITH PAPER TOWELS TO AVOID STICKING.

UP TO **12**

HOW MANY MONTHS MISO WILL KEEP IN THE REFRIGERATOR. (SOME SOURCES SAY YEARS.) USE A CLEAN SPOON FOR EACH DIP.

Photographs by Jen Causey

Food Styling by Chelsea Zimmer

PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN

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Slow Cooker ( )
One Pot ( )
Whole-Grain ( )
Vegetarian ( )
Gluten-Free (X)

EASY DINNER

1

Salmon salad with herbed yogurt

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- ⅓ cup Greek yogurt
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice, divided
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh dill, divided
- 1¾ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- ½ tsp. black pepper, divided
- 3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 4 (6-oz.) salmon fillets
- 1 (5-oz.) pkg. baby spring greens mix
- 1 (15-oz.) can white beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 small shallot, thinly sliced
- ½ English cucumber, sliced

STIR together the yogurt, 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice, 1 tablespoon of the dill, ½ teaspoon of the salt, and ¼ teaspoon of the pepper.

HEAT 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Sprinkle the salmon with ¾ teaspoon of the salt and ¼ teaspoon of the pepper. Cook the salmon in batches until just cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes per side.

TOSS together the spring greens and the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil, 1 tablespoon of lemon juice, and ½ teaspoon of salt. Divide the salad among 4 plates. Top each with the beans, shallot, cucumber, salmon, herbed yogurt, and the remaining dill.

Recipes by
Emily Nabors Hall

- ( ) Quick Cooking
- (x) Healthy Pick
- ( ) Freezable
- (x) Make Ahead
- ( ) Big Batch
- ( ) Slow Cooker
- ( ) One Pot
- ( ) Whole-Grain
- (x) Vegetarian
- ( ) Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

2

Spring vegetable frittata

ACTIVE TIME **35 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES** SERVES **4 TO 6**

- 1½ Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- ½ lb. fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 cups chopped broccoli
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- 8 large eggs
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- ¾ tsp. black pepper, divided
- 2 oz. goat cheese, crumbled
- 1 tsp. sherry vinegar
- 6 cups watercress
- Crusty bread, for serving

PREHEAT the oven to 400°F. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a nonstick ovenproof skillet over medium-high. Add the asparagus and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 3 minutes. Add the broccoli and tomatoes; cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes burst and the broccoli softens, 5 minutes more.

WHISK together the eggs, 1 teaspoon of the salt, and ½ teaspoon of the pepper. Pour over the vegetables in the skillet and cook, stirring gently, until the eggs just begin to set, about 1 minute. Sprinkle with the goat cheese and transfer the pan to the oven. Bake until the center is set, 10 to 12 minutes.

MEANWHILE, whisk together the vinegar and the remaining salt, pepper, and oil in a large bowl. Toss with the watercress to coat. Cut the frittata into wedges. Serve with the watercress and bread.

NUTRITION
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- ( ) Slow Cooker
- (x) One Pot
- ( ) Whole-Grain
- ( ) Vegetarian
- ( ) Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

3

Sesame chicken noodle bowl

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES** SERVES **6**

- 1 Tbsp. sesame oil
- 1 lb. chicken cutlets, cut into ½-inch-wide strips
- 4 oz. fresh shiitake mushrooms, stems removed, sliced
- 2 carrots, cut into matchsticks
- 1 Tbsp. grated fresh ginger
- 6 scallions, white and green parts separated, thinly sliced
- 3 Tbsp. white miso
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 8 oz. uncooked wide rice noodles
- 12 oz. baby bok choy, quartered
- 1 Tbsp. rice vinegar

HEAT the oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high. Add the chicken and cook until just opaque but not brown, about 3 minutes. Remove and set aside. Add the mushrooms, carrots, ginger, scallion whites, and miso to the pot and cook, stirring constantly, 1 minute. Add the broth and 3 cups water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 15 minutes.

ADD the chicken to the soup and simmer 5 minutes. Add the noodles and bok choy and cook until softened, 3 to 4 minutes. Just before serving, stir in the vinegar and scallion greens.

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- [ ] Vegetarian
- [x] Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

4

Steak and plantain tacos

ACTIVE TIME **25 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

FOOD

¼ cup cider vinegar
½ tsp. granulated sugar
2½ tsp. kosher salt, divided
¾ tsp. black pepper, divided
6 cups shredded red cabbage (about 1 head)
¼ cup sliced scallions, divided
1 lb. flank steak
1 large ripe plantain, peeled
¼ tsp. ground chipotle chile pepper
2 tsp. canola oil
8 (6-inch) corn tortillas, warmed
Sour cream and sliced avocado, for garnish

MICROWAVE the vinegar, sugar, 1 teaspoon of the salt, and ¼ teaspoon of the pepper in a microwave-safe bowl until hot, about 30 seconds. Stir to dissolve the sugar. Add the cabbage and half the scallions; toss to coat.

SPRINKLE the steak with 1 teaspoon of the salt and the remaining pepper. Cut the plantain in half crosswise, then lengthwise into 4 long slices. Sprinkle with the ground chipotle and the remaining salt.

HEAT the oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high and cook the steak, 4 to 5 minutes per side for medium-rare. Transfer to a cutting board; let rest 5 minutes before slicing against the grain. Meanwhile, add the plantains to the skillet and cook until golden, 2 minutes per side.

DIVIDE the steak, plantains, sour cream, avocado, and the remaining scallions among the tortillas. Serve with the slaw.

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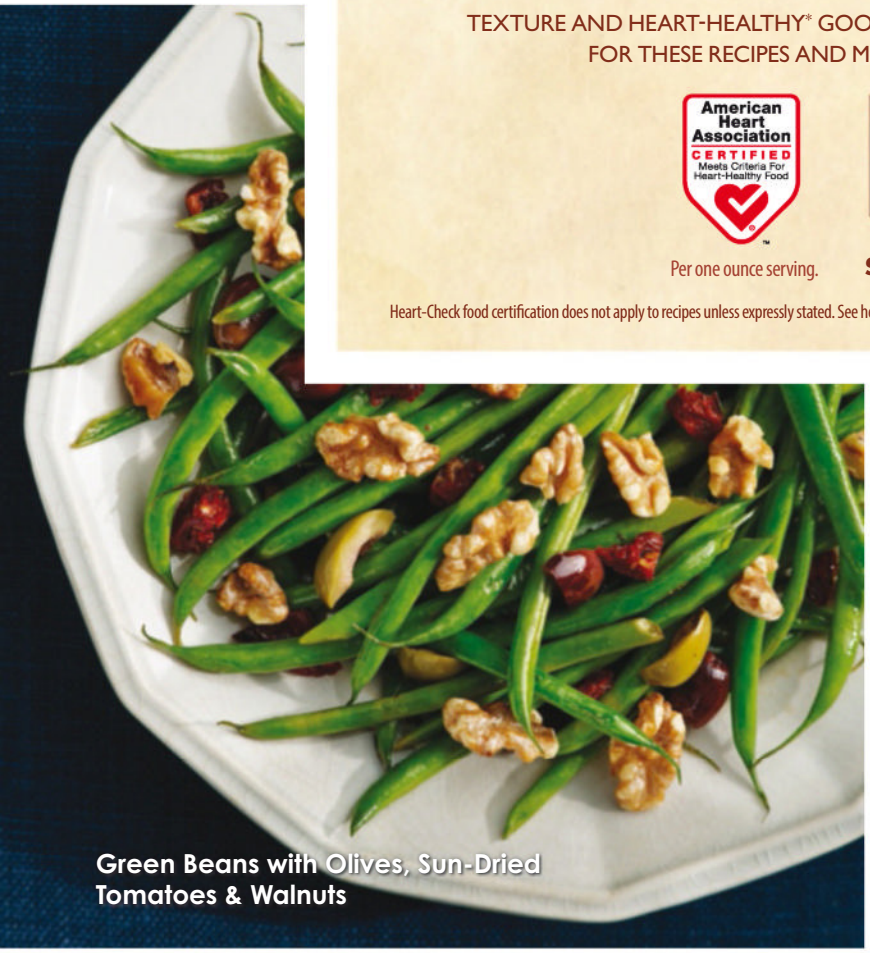

*Supportive but not conclusive research shows that eating 1.5 ounces of walnuts per day, as part of a low saturated fat and low cholesterol diet and not resulting in increased caloric intake, may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. (FDA) One ounce of walnuts provides 18g of total fat, 2.5g of monounsaturated fat, 13g of polyunsaturated fat including 2.5g of alpha-linolenic acid the plant based omega-3.

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EASY DINNER
5

Tomato-and-bacon flatbread with greens

ACTIVE TIME **30 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **50 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 2 large tomatoes, sliced
- ½ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 lb. fresh pizza dough
- 1 Tbsp. yellow cornmeal
- 4 slices thick-cut bacon
- ½ small shallot, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 2 tsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella (about 4 oz.)
- 2 cups mixed baby greens

PREHEAT the oven to 450°F. Lay the tomato slices on a paper towel–lined plate and sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon of the salt. Top with more paper towels and set aside.

STRETCH the dough into a 16-by-10-inch oval on a clean surface sprinkled with cornmeal. (If the dough pulls back, let it rest 15 minutes.) Transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Set aside.

COOK the bacon over medium in a nonstick skillet until crispy. Transfer to a paper towel–lined plate, reserving 2 tablespoons of the drippings in the skillet. Reduce heat to low and add the shallot, garlic, pepper, and the remaining salt. Cook 1 minute. Whisk in the vinegar. Brush 2 tablespoons of the vinaigrette over the dough.

BAKE the dough until it is brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Top with the tomatoes, bacon (broken into pieces), and mozzarella. Return to oven and bake until the cheese is melted and beginning to brown, about 10 minutes more. Toss the greens with the remaining vinaigrette and serve over the flatbread.

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Things Cooks Know

Simplifying strategies, techniques, and tips—from the *Real Simple* test kitchen to yours

Salt (then eat) your vegetables

HOW MUCH? Use ½ to 1 teaspoon of table salt (which covers more surface area than chunky kosher salt) per pound of cut vegetables.

Tomatoes, zucchini, eggplant, and mushrooms release water when they cook. Fine for pasta sauce, bad for pizza crust. To keep things from getting soggy (like on the Tomato-and-Bacon Flatbread on page 178), extract excess moisture from these vegetables before cooking by salting and resting them. (Bonus: The salt seasons at the same time.) Sprinkle cut vegetables with salt and drain on paper towels or in a colander while you prep the rest of the meal, at least 30 minutes.

ASIAN NOODLE PRIMER

Whether you're ordering your favorite takeout or making a Sesame Chicken Noodle Bowl (page 174) at home, it's helpful to know your udon from your lo mein. Here are the basics.

TYPE	MADE FROM	LOOKS LIKE	TASTES	BEST SERVED
LO MEIN	WHEAT FLOUR	Thick yellow noodles. Use a roomy pot to avoid sticking.	Eggy with a soft, doughy texture.	In saucy Chinese dishes; sauces cling to starchy noodles.
RAMEN	WHEAT FLOUR	Wavy, yarn-thin noodles sold in a block. It untangles as it cooks.	Eggy (even though no eggs are used), with a springy texture.	In ramen bowls with broth and lots of toppings.
RICE	RICE	Flat white noodles that just need a dip in boiling water.	Neutral, with a soft and elastic texture.	As the base in pad thai and Vietnamese pho.
SOBA	BUCKWHEAT FLOUR	Thin, brown spaghetti. Cooks like spaghetti, too.	Nutty, with a firm texture.	Cold with a simple sauce, like peanut.
UDON	WHEAT FLOUR	White, thick strands. Don't overcook; they'll get gummy.	Neutral, with a dense, chewy texture.	In spicy dishes. The hefty noodles balance out the heat.

Gluten-free

More protein than other varieties

WANT TO MAKE GRAINS EVEN GREATER?

Toast them. This simple step—before you boil—gives rice, quinoa, and farro a deeper, more pronounced flavor. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil (a thin layer) in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the grain and cook, stirring frequently, until golden brown. Then add the water and cook according to the package directions.

GRAINIAC
For the ultimate guide to buying, cooking, and eating whole grains, go to realsimple.com/wholegrains.

Written by
Heath Goldman
Illustrations by
Melinda Josie

FOOD

SOME THINGS ARE TOTALLY ARTIFICIAL.

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RADISHES

Sure, they're great shaved into salads or tucked into tea sandwiches, but you don't need to treat them so preciously. Try roasting them, greens and all, in pancetta fat for pasta, or pickle some to make spring's most stirring cocktail garnish.

Written by Heath Goldman
Recipes by Julia Levy
Photographs by Greg Dupree
Food Styling by Torie Cox

prep-y handbook

The watermelon radishes shown here have a green exterior and a fuchsia interior. Other varieties are fully red, pink, purple, or even black. Although different colors correspond to slightly different shapes and sizes, they all share a crisp texture and a spicy flavor and can be used interchangeably.

wrinkle-free

Radishes that feel soft or look wrinkly will probably be spongy inside. Choose bulbs that are smooth, with perky leaves. Store radishes in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 1 week with the leaves removed. (Otherwise they will draw moisture from the roots.)

PROP STYLING BY CAROLINE CUNNINGHAM

1

Radishes with caraway-avocado aïoli

Pulse 1 ripe, peeled, and pitted **AVOCADO,** 1 Tbsp. **MAYONNAISE,** and 1 Tbsp. **FRESH LEMON JUICE** in a food processor until smooth. Transfer to a shallow bowl; sprinkle with **SEA SALT FLAKES** (like Maldon) and 1 Tbsp. each chopped **CHIVES** and toasted **CARAWAY SEEDS.** Serve with whole (if small) or halved **RADISHES** (like Easter Egg radishes) for dipping. SERVES **6**

2

Quick pickled radishes

Bring ⅓ cup **SUGAR,** 1 tsp. **BLACK PEPPERCORNS,** 1 **BAY LEAF,** ¾ cup each **APPLE CIDER VINEGAR** and **WATER,** and 2 tsp. each **CORIANDER SEEDS** and **KOSHER SALT** to a simmer in a small saucepan until the salt and sugar dissolve. Pour the hot liquid over 1 bunch trimmed and halved **RADISHES** (like globe radishes) in a 16-oz. jar. Cover and chill 24 hours or up to 2 weeks. Serve as a garnish for a martini, gimlet, or hamburger.

3

Roasted radishes

Toss 1¼ lb. trimmed and halved **RADISHES** with 1 Tbsp. **OLIVE OIL,** 1 tsp. **KOSHER SALT,** and ½ tsp. **BLACK PEPPER.** Bake at 400°F until tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Toss with 1 Tbsp. each **FRESH LIME JUICE** and chopped **FRESH PARSLEY.** Sprinkle with 2 Tbsp. chopped roasted, salted **PISTACHIOS.** SERVES **4**

4

Sautéed radish, greens, and pancetta pasta

Cook 12 oz. **LINGUINE;** drain, reserving 1 cup of the **PASTA WATER.** Trim the greens from 1½ lb. **RADISHES.** Cut the radishes in wedges. Cook 4 oz. diced **PANCETTA** in a skillet; remove. Add the radishes; cook until tender, about 7 minutes. Add the **RADISH GREENS** and 2 Tbsp. chopped **GARLIC;** cook until wilted. Toss with the pasta, 2 Tbsp. **FRESH LEMON JUICE,** pasta water, **KOSHER SALT, BLACK PEPPER,** pancetta, and shaved **PARMESAN.** SERVES **4**

5

Spinach and radish salad with Feta

Combine 2½ Tbsp. **EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL,** 2 Tbsp. **RED WINE VINEGAR,** 2 tsp. each **HONEY** and chopped **FRESH DILL,** and ½ tsp. each **KOSHER SALT** and **BLACK PEPPER** in a small jar. Cover and shake until combined. Toss with 5 oz. **BABY SPINACH,** ½ cup thinly sliced **WATERMELON RADISHES,** and 2 oz. shaved **FETA.** SERVES **4**

6

Radish, cucumber, and mint salsa

Stir together 4 chopped **RADISHES,** ½ cup chopped **ENGLISH CUCUMBER,** 2 Tbsp. chopped **FRESH MINT,** ½ tsp. **KOSHER SALT,** ¼ tsp. **BLACK PEPPER,** 1 Tbsp. each **WHITE BALSAMIC VINEGAR** and **EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL,** and 1 finely chopped **SHALLOT** in a bowl; let sit for 20 to 30 minutes. Serve with steak or lamb. SERVES **4**

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Written by Heath Goldman
Photographs by Aaron Dyer

PROP STYLING BY JOJO LI

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4 BEST BARGAIN

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5 BEST HALF

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TODAY

Overnight oats with strawberries and toasted almonds

ACTIVE **10 MINUTES** TOTAL **8 HOURS, INCLUDING 8 HOURS CHILLING** SERVES **1**

It's a new way of eating an old favorite: soft, sweet, no-cook oats served straight from the fridge.

Recipe by Robby Melvin
Photograph by Jen Causey
Food Styling by Chelsea Zimmer

- ½ cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ½ cup whole milk
- 1 tsp. honey, plus more for serving
- ¼ tsp. vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup quartered strawberries
- 2 Tbsp. slivered almonds, toasted

STIR together the oats, milk, honey, vanilla, and salt in a bowl until combined.

COVER and refrigerate overnight, or up to 2 days.

REMOVE from the refrigerator and stir. Top with the strawberries and almonds. Drizzle with more honey, if desired.

MIX IT UP
This technique works with any type of milk, including almond, soy, or coconut. To add a bit more body in the morning, stir in a spoonful of full-fat yogurt.

FOOD

PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN

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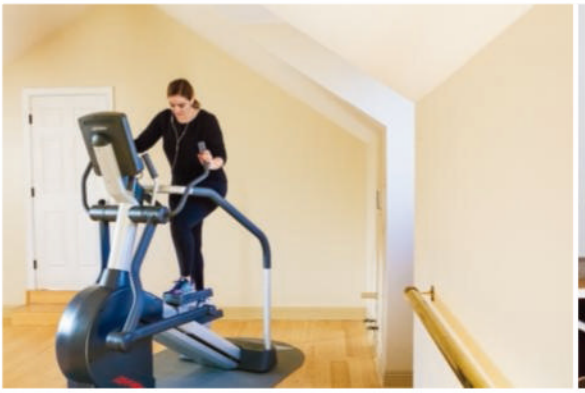
A Life in Full

THIS ENTREPRENEUR HAS A RAPIDLY GROWING BUSINESS. HERE'S HOW SHE MANAGES THE REST OF HER LIFE AS WELL.

SUSAN PETERSEN, 37

- Founder of Freshly Picked, a baby-lifestyle company
- Married to Christian Petersen, with a daughter, Hattie, 9, and a son, Gus, 7
- Provo, Utah



6:15 A.M. "About three days a week, I wake up early and work out on the exercise machine upstairs before I get the kids ready for school. It's one of the only times I get to be alone."

STEERING THE SHIP
"The best part of owning your own business? I get to make all the decisions. The worst part? I have to make all the decisions."

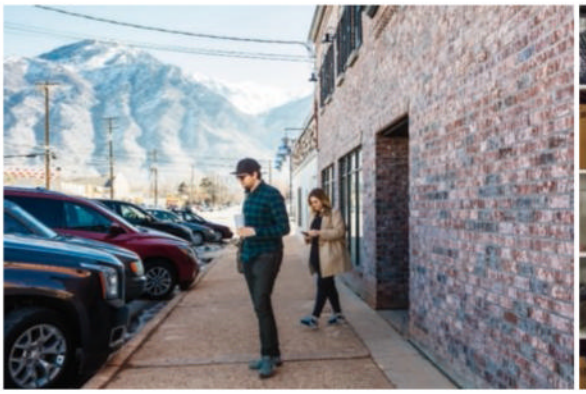
9:30 A.M. "When my son was a baby, I couldn't find moccasins for him, so I made them myself. I started selling them on Etsy. Now I have 15 employees, and we want to double in size."

SUSAN'S WORKING-MOM CREDO

No. 1
"I compartmentalize my day so that whatever I'm doing, I focus on that activity 100 percent."

No. 2
"I have a work uniform: a black shirt, black jeans, a leather jacket, and tennis shoes or boots. It's one less decision to make a day."

No. 3
"I will no longer kill myself working late into the night. Now I'm in bed by 9:30 P.M., and I'm more alert and productive. If I leave things undone, it all still works out."



12:05 P.M. "My COO, Ethan Moore, and I are off to meet with potential investors. One of my strengths is that I don't get nervous about things beforehand. But afterwards I'll freak out."

2:25 P.M. "I went to the storeroom to grab a pair of moccasins for a visitor. We have a warehouse in Salt Lake City, but there's a small stash here at the office for sales samples and returns."

4:00 P.M. "I'm going over the colors for our spring 2017 line, figuring out what did well in the past and what didn't. Platinum and weathered brown are always the best sellers."

6:40 P.M. "If I get stuck working late, my husband, Christian, will make Hattie and Gus something easy, like pasta. But when I'm home for dinner, he'll put in more effort—he's a great cook."

JUST THE TWO OF US
"One thing I'm consciously working on is my marriage. Christian and I started doing date nights every week. And we made a rule: Phones must be turned off during them."

Photographs by David Meredith

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